



## Maker of OxyContin agrees to \$270M settlement in Okla.

By SEAN MURPHY and GE-OFF MULVIHILL  
Associated Press

**OKLAHOMA CITY (AP)** — The maker of OxyContin and the company's controlling family agreed Tuesday to pay a groundbreaking \$270 million to Oklahoma to settle allegations they helped create the nation's deadly opioid crisis with their aggressive marketing of the powerful painkiller. It is the first settlement to come out of the recent coast-to-coast wave of nearly 2,000 lawsuits against Purdue Pharma that threaten to push the company into bankruptcy and have stained the name of the Sackler family, whose members rank among the world's foremost philanthropists.

"The addiction crisis facing our state and nation is a clear and present danger, but we're doing something about it today," Oklahoma Attorney General Mike Hunter said.

Nearly \$200 million will go toward establishing a National Center for Addiction Studies and Treatment at Oklahoma State University in Tulsa, while local govern-



Oklahoma Attorney General Mike Hunter speaks about a settlement with Purdue Pharma for opioid abuse, Tuesday, March 26, 2019. Associated Press

ments will get \$12.5 million. The Sacklers are responsible for \$75 million of the settlement.

In settling, the Stamford, Connecticut-based com-

pany denied any wrongdoing in connection with what Hunter called "this nightmarish epidemic" and "the worst public health crisis in our state and nation

we've ever seen." The deal comes two months before Oklahoma's 2017 lawsuit against Purdue Pharma and other drug companies was set to be-

come the first one in the recent barrage of litigation to go to trial. The remaining defendants still face trial May 28.

Continued on Next Page

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**OXYCONTIN**

Continued from Front

Opioids, including heroin and prescription drugs such as OxyContin, were a factor in a record 48,000 deaths across the U.S. in 2017, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Oklahoma recorded about 400 opioid deaths that year. State officials have said that since 2009, more Oklahomans have died from opioids than in vehicle crashes. Other states have suffered far worse, including West Virginia, with the nation's highest opioid death rate. It had over 1,000 deaths in 2017.

In a statement, Purdue Pharma said the money that will go toward addiction studies and treatment in Oklahoma will help people across the country. CEO Craig Landau said the company is committed to "help drive solutions to the opioid addiction crisis." Plaintiffs' attorney Paul Hanly, who is not involved in the Oklahoma case but is representing scores of other governments, welcomed the deal, saying: "That suggests that Purdue is serious about trying to deal with the problem. Hopefully, this

is the first of many."

But some activists were furious, saying they were denied the chance to hold Purdue Pharma fully accountable in public, in front of a jury.

"This decision is a kick in the gut to our community," said Ryan Hampton, of Los Angeles, who is recovering from opioid addiction. "We deserve to have our day in court with Purdue. The parents, the families, the survivors deserve at least that. And Oklahoma stripped that from us today."

Purdue Pharma introduced OxyContin in the 1990s and marketed it hard to doctors, making tens of billions of dollars from the drug. But the company has been hit with lawsuits from state and local governments trying to hold it responsible for the scourge of addiction.

The lawsuits accuse the company of downplaying the addiction risks and pushing doctors to increase dosages even as the dangers became known. According to a court filing, Richard Sackler, then senior vice president responsible for sales, proudly told the audience at a launch party for OxyContin in 1996 that it would create a "blizzard of



This Feb. 19, 2013, file photo shows OxyContin pills arranged for a photo at a pharmacy in Montpelier, Vt.

Associated Press

prescriptions that will bury the competition."

Earlier this month, Purdue Pharma officials acknowledged that they are considering bankruptcy. But Oklahoma's attorney general said the company gave assurances it will not take such a step in the near term. And he said the settlement money is "bankruptcy proof" — that is, "it's not at risk in the event Purdue declares bankruptcy."

Lance Lang, a 36-year-old recovering user from Oklahoma City, said he is glad some of the settlement will go toward helping those still suffering from addiction. "My heart breaks for those that we've already lost. I've buried several myself," said Lang, who now helps recovering users find housing. "But I also know we have waiting lists of dozens and dozens for our facilities, and the state has waiting lists of hundreds and hundreds of people who need help right now."

But Cheryl Juaire, whose 23-year-old son Corey died of an overdose in 2011, said she was devastated to

hear about the settlement. Juaire, who lives in Marlborough, Massachusetts, had been organizing a group of hundreds of mothers to go to the first day of the trial and stand outside with photos of their dead children. She said a complete airing of the facts is the only way to fully hold Purdue to account.

A settlement is "a huge disservice to the tens of thousands of families here in the United States who buried a child," she said. "That's blood money from our children."

Members of the Sackler family are defendants in some of the lawsuits but were not actually parties to the Oklahoma case. The company said the family nevertheless voluntarily contributed to the settlement. "We have profound compassion for those who are affected by addiction," the family said in a statement.

The Sacklers are major donors to cultural institutions, and the family name is emblazoned on the walls at many of the world's

great museums and universities. In the past few weeks, as the accusations have mounted, the Tate museums in London and the Guggenheim Museum in New York have cut ties with the family, and other institutions have come under pressure to turn down donations or remove the Sackler name.

A Massachusetts court filing made public earlier this year found that Sackler family members were paid at least \$4 billion from 2007 until last year.

Purdue Pharma has settled other lawsuits over the years, and three executives pleaded guilty to criminal charges in 2007. But this is the first settlement to come out of the surge of litigation in the past few years that focuses largely on the company's more recent conduct.

More than 1,400 federal lawsuits over the opioid crisis have been consolidated in front of a single judge in Cleveland who is pushing the drugmakers and distributors to reach a nationwide settlement. □



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## U.S. Education Department investigating college bribery scheme

By COLLIN BINKLEY  
AP Education Writer

Eight universities embroiled in a massive college admission cheating scheme are now being investigated by the U.S. Education Department.

ted to elite U.S. schools. Among 50 people charged were parents, college sports coaches and athletics officials, but the schools themselves have not been targeted. Still, the Education Department

to comply with all laws and regulations." Yale President Peter Salovey said he received the request "and will respond appropriately." The University of Texas at Austin said it is working with

the department while it also conducts its own internal review. In total, 33 parents have been charged with rigging standardized test scores and bribing college coaches to guarantee their

children's admission. In the bribery scheme, coaches in sports from sailing to soccer are accused of accepting bribes to recruit students as athletes even though, in some cases, the students didn't play the sport. □



Education Secretary Betsy DeVos speaks during a House Appropriations subcommittee hearing on budget on Capitol Hill in Washington, Tuesday, March 26, 2019.

Associated Press

Letters sent to the schools Monday and obtained by The Associated Press say the department is conducting a "preliminary investigation" to determine whether they violated federal laws or rules surrounding the management of federal student aid. A department spokeswoman said the agency does not confirm or comment on ongoing investigations. Education Secretary Betsy DeVos previously called the bribery scheme "disgraceful," saying students should get into college based on their merits. The inquiry stems from a sweeping scheme uncovered by the Justice Department in which wealthy parents allegedly paid bribes to get their children admitted

to elite U.S. schools. The letter told colleges that the allegations "raise questions about whether your institution is fully meeting its obligations" under federal education laws. The letter was sent to the presidents of Yale, Wake Forest, Stanford and Georgetown universities, along with the University of Southern California; the University of San Diego; the University of Texas, Austin; and the University of California, Los Angeles. Several schools confirmed that they received the letter and said they will work to provide records and information requested by the department. The University of Southern California issued a statement saying it will "fully cooperate" and will "continue

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## Trump border emergency survives as House veto override fails



President Donald Trump accompanied by Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell of Ky., left, arrives for a Senate Republican policy lunch on Capitol Hill in Washington, Tuesday, March 26, 2019.

Associated Press

By ALAN FRAM  
Associated Press  
**WASHINGTON (AP)** — The Democratic-led House failed Tuesday to override President Donald Trump's first veto, salvaging his effort to steer billions of extra dollars to erecting border barriers and delivering a victory to the White House in a constitutional and political clash that's raged for months.

Lawmakers voted 248-181 to overturn Trump's veto, but that fell 38 votes shy of the required two-thirds margin. Just days after Attorney General William Barr announced that special counsel Robert Muel-

ler had found Trump didn't scheme with Russia to help his 2016 election, Tuesday's vote bolstered Trump's drive to build a wall along the boundary with Mexico, a hallmark of his 2016 presidential campaign and a priority of his presidency.

"Thank you to the House Republicans for sticking together and the BIG WIN today on the Border," Trump tweeted. "Today's vote simply reaffirms Congressional Democrats are the party of Open Borders, Drugs and Crime!"

While clearly a defeat for Democrats, the vote afforded them a chance to reemphasize policy differences with Trump and change the subject from collusion allegations that have lost political clout. Underscoring that, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi placed her name atop a House Democratic fundraising email referencing the failed veto override, writing, "I know grassroots Democrats won't let Trump's enablers get away with this."

Just 14 Republicans joined all voting Democrats in Tuesday's futile effort to void Trump's declaration of a national emergency at the Southwest border. By invoking that power, Trump has said he will shift \$3.6 billion from military construction to erecting barriers along that boundary. Congress has voted to provide less than \$1.4 billion for border barriers, leaving Democrats and some Republicans fuming that Trump is abusing his powers by ignoring Congress' constitutional control over spending.

Despite his veto remaining intact, Trump may not be able to spend the money for barriers quickly because of lawsuits by Democratic

state attorneys general and others that could take years to resolve.

Trump insisted during his campaign that Mexico, not taxpayers, would pay for the wall. To keep the issue alive into the 2020 campaign season, House Democrats may force fresh votes on the emergency declaration in six months, as the law allows.

The Pentagon sent lawmakers a list last week of hundreds of military construction projects that might be cut to pay for barrier work. Though the list was tentative, Democrats say that by backing Trump, GOP lawmakers were endangering local bases to pay for the wall.

Unhappiness over Trump's plan to siphon the money from the military has become a bipartisan concern. On top of the \$3.6 billion from construction, the Pentagon has informed Congress that it wants to steer another \$1 billion from personnel accounts to border barriers.

At a House Armed Services Committee hearing Tuesday, panel Chairman Adam Smith, D-Wash., said it was wrong to use the Pentagon as "sort of a piggybank-slash-slush fund." The committee's top Republican, Mac Thornberry of Texas, also said he opposes redirecting defense funds.

Acting Defense Secretary Patrick Shanahan told the lawmakers that while his department could pay a future price for maneuvering around Congress, he was following a "legal order from the commander in chief." Congress had approved a resolution annulling the national emergency that Trump declared at the U.S.-Mexico border in February. □

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# Flooding poses potential risk for 1 million private wells

By JIM SALTER

Associated Press

**ST. LOUIS (AP)** — More than 1 million private wells that supply drinking water in mostly rural parts of the Midwest could face the risk of contamination from floodwater, posing a health concern that could linger long after the flooding subsides.

Major flooding along the Missouri and Mississippi rivers and several smaller waterways has inundated states in the middle of America, from the Canadian border south to Kentucky. The National Weather Service has warned that with snowmelt in northern states only beginning, the threat of additional flooding persists well into spring.

The high water and swift current carries raw sewage from overburdened treatment plants, animal waste and pesticides from farm fields, and spilled fuel.

"Whatever was on the land is in the water now," said Steve May, assistant chief of the Missouri Bureau of Environmental Epidemiology.

Contaminated water can carry bacteria such as *E. coli* that can cause gastrointestinal illness, reproductive problems and neurological disorders, according to the Centers

for Disease Control and Prevention. Infants, young children, pregnant women, elderly people, and people with compromised immune systems are particularly vulnerable.

The National Ground Water Association, a trade group for the industry that includes well systems, said there are 1.1 million private wells in 300 flooded counties in 10 states: Iowa, Nebraska, Missouri, Kansas, Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin, Minnesota, South Dakota and Kentucky.

Stagnant water could linger for days or even weeks even as flooding starts to subside in hard-hit areas, raising the risk that some of it will get into wells by flooding over the top, seeping through cracks or as a result of other flaws in the well structure.

Liesa Lehmann, private-water section chief for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, said her state has an estimated 700,000 to 800,000 private wells. The National Ground Water Association said the current flood poses a risk to more than 280,000 Wisconsin wells, the most in any state.

"Anyone who has a private well within a flood plain area of a major river, those wells are certainly going to

be vulnerable to contamination," Lehmann said.

Drinking water comes from a variety of sources. Some public water supplies use rivers, streams, lakes or other bodies of water. Others use water from the ground. Either way, public water supplies are government-regulated and have safeguards to protect against contamination.

But the federal government estimates that about 15 million U.S. households — most often in rural areas that don't have access to public drinking water systems — rely on private wells. Those wells are not typically regulated by the Environmental Protection Agency, so it's up to the well owner to make sure the water is clean.

Owners of private wells use a variety of methods to remove contaminants, including filtration systems, water softeners, distillation systems that boil out the impurities, and disinfectants such as chlorine. But if floodwater gets into a well, those efforts may not be enough.



This Wednesday, March 20, 2019 aerial photo shows flooding near the Platte River in Plattsmouth, Neb., south of Omaha.

Associated Press

Lehmann said well owners who see floodwater near or over their wells should assume the drinking water supply is contaminated. She encouraged them to watch for any change in the color, smell or taste of their water, and to consider alternatives such as bottled water.

Once flooding recedes, remaining well water should be pumped out and the well should be disinfected, said Chuck Job, regulatory affairs manager for the National Ground Water Asso-

ciation. Lehmann said that because the presence of so much water poses an electrocution risk, well owners should hire professionals to do the work.

Once the well is disinfected, water should be tested to make sure it's safe, Job said. At least one state is offering free well-water testing in flooded areas. Missouri property owners seeking free testing must obtain collection kits from the Missouri State Public Health Laboratory and submit samples using those kits. □

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# Mapping pot legalization politics: Not just red vs. blue

By JENNIFER PELTZ  
Associated Press

**NEW YORK (AP)** — To anyone who figured the path of legalizing recreational marijuana use ran along blue state-red state lines, a sudden setback for pot advocates in New Jersey may show the issue isn't so black-and-white.

Leaders in solidly-blue New Jersey are vowing it will still join the 10 states that have legalized the drug. But when a state Senate vote was abruptly put off Monday because it didn't have enough support, the delay was a reminder that the politics of pot legalization aren't purely partisan. The key question instead can be whether voters or legislators are making the decision, experts say.

"It's a good illustration that even in a state that's entirely Democratically controlled, it's not obvious that it would be passed — or that it would be easy," says Daniel Mallinson, a Penn State Harrisburg professor who studies how marijuana legalization and other policies spread among states. Since voters in the states of Colorado and Washington decided in 2012 to let adults use marijuana for fun, legalization has traveled a route that looks — from a distance — something like the red-and-blue maps that frame many a U.S. political conversation. Residents of Democratic states on the West Coast and parts of the Northeast, for instance, have said yes, as has the District of Columbia. Lawmakers in Republican-led North Dakota and Arizona have said no.



In this Friday, March 22, 2019, file photo, a marijuana plant is visible at Compassionate Care Foundation's medical marijuana dispensary in Egg Harbor Township, N.J.

Associated Press

But look closer, and the trend isn't so clear. Voters in Ruby-red Alaska OK'd recreational pot in 2014, while legalization fizzled this year in the state legislature in deeply Democratic Hawaii. Several states where it passed — like Massachusetts, Michigan and Vermont — are less blue than purple, with governors and legislative leaders of different parties.

And overall, 61 percent of American adults say marijuana should be legal, including majorities of Republicans and Democrats, according to the General Social Survey conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago.

The Democratic governors and legislature leaders of New York and New Jersey have been jostling to make their states next in line to legalize marijuana, but the effort hasn't gone

as smoothly as they might have hoped.

New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo aimed to pass marijuana legalization in the budget due April 1, but the issue may well linger until later this spring. Open questions include how to handle clearing past convictions and how to ensure that minority communities that bore the brunt of criminalization get potential opportunities in the marijuana business.

Those are also among the sticking points that prompted the New Jersey Senate to postpone Monday's planned vote, which would fulfill a campaign promise from Gov. Phil Murphy. Senate President Steve Sweeney insisted it would still pass eventually but didn't say when a vote might come.

Opponents see the development as an important

victory.

"This is really going to send a strong signal nationwide that legalization is not inevitable," even in Democrat-dominated states, says Kevin Sabet, a former Obama administration drug-policy adviser who now heads Smart Approaches to Marijuana, an anti-legalization group.

Pot advocates, meanwhile, say they don't expect it to be easy to change policy about a drug that was illegal in all 50 states for decades, and still is in the federal government's view.

"It's not surprising that lawmakers are moving slowly and cautiously," said Mason Tvert, a spokesman for the pro-legalization Marijuana Policy Project.

Nine of the 10 states that have legalized recreational marijuana did so through voter referendums — not through their legislatures.

Vermont is the exception. To marijuana-policy experts, that's a more telling divide than a state's place on the partisan map.

"I actually see this as a populist-movement-vs.-representative (body) issue," says Andrew Freedman, who helped set up Colorado's recreational-pot program and now consults governments on doing so.

Why the difference? In part, voters are usually presented with more general propositions, with regulations to be fleshed out later, while legislators are likely weighing more details — and political considerations, experts say.

"A vote of the people is much more aspirational in terms of what you want your state to look like, and the vote to implement is much more what your state will look like. And then you have to own the outcome," Freedman says.

"When you start to talk about: how are you going to ensure minority-owned businesses, or what level of tax rates, or suddenly a representative has to go talk to their chief of police who is against it ... there's a lot of political risk for an elected official," he added.

For all that, lawmakers in 21 states at least proposed legalizing marijuana last year, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures.

"It's not an exclusive discussion to blue states or red states," says Karmen Hanson, a cannabis policy analyst for the group. "States are talking about it in the rainbow of red, blue and purple." □



In this Monday, March 18, 2019, file photo, the logo for Southwest Airlines appears above a trading post on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange.

Associated Press

## Southwest 737 Max makes emergency landing in Orlando

**ORLANDO, Fla. (AP)** — A Southwest Airlines Boeing 737 Max made a safe emergency landing Tuesday in Orlando, Florida, after experiencing an engine problem, the Federal Aviation Administration said. The crew declared an emergency after taking off

from Orlando International Airport around 2:50 p.m., and returned to the airport safely. No passengers were on board, and the aircraft was being ferried to Victorville, California, where Southwest is storing the airplanes. The 737 Max was grounded

in the U.S. March 13 after a deadly crash involving a Max in Ethiopia on March 10.

It was the second fatal crash involving the airplane. U.S. airlines are allowed to shuttle the planes but cannot carry passengers. □



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## County bans unvaccinated minors in public as measles spreads

By MARY ESCH  
Associated Press

**ALBANY, N.Y. (AP)** — A county in New York City's northern suburbs declared a state of emergency Tuesday over a measles outbreak that has infected more than 150 people since last fall, hoping a ban against unvaccinated children in public places wakes their parents to the seriousness of the problem. "It's an attention grab, there's no question about it," Rockland County Executive Ed Day said at a news conference, noting that he didn't believe such a drastic step has ever been tried in the U.S. before.

Day said he was taking the action in hopes of reversing a recent uptick in cases amid disturbing reports that health workers were encountering resistance when investigating cases. Rockland's outbreak has most heavily affected Orthodox Jewish communities, in which vaccination rates tend to be lower.

Under the declaration, which lasts for at least 30 days, anyone under 18 who is not vaccinated against measles is barred from public gathering places, including shopping malls, civic centers, schools, restaurants and even houses of worship. Those in violation could be charged with a misdemeanor punishable by up to six months in jail.

But Day acknowledged that there will be no concerted enforcement effort and that the intent is not to arrest people but to emphasize the seriousness of the situation.

"There will not be law enforcement or deputy sheriffs asking for vaccination records. That is ridiculous," Day said. "However, parents will be held accountable if they're found to be in violation of this emergency declaration."

The county is experiencing New York state's longest measles outbreak since the disease was declared officially eliminated from the United States in 2000. Health officials say the best way to stop the disease's spread is a vaccination rate in the community of 92 to 95 percent. Day said only 72.9 percent of people under 18 have been vaccinated against measles in Rockland County, which has more than 300,000 residents. Civil rights attorney Michael Sussman, who represents the parents of 44 unvaccinated children who were barred from a Waldorf School in the county, said he would discuss a possible challenge to the emergency declaration in a meeting with his clients Tuesday night.

"It's irrational," Sussman said. "You're punishing people who don't have the illness rather than quarantining people who are sick."

Sussman said a quarantine of measles patients and those close to them would quickly stop the disease's spread.

This month, a federal judge, citing the "unprecedented measles outbreak," denied the parents' request to let unvaccinated children return to the Waldorf School. The lawsuit said the county's order banning un-



Rockland County Executive Ed Day speaks to the media, Tuesday, March 26, 2019, at his New City, N.Y., office.

Associated Press

vaccinated children from schools regardless of religious or medical exemptions violated their constitutional rights.

The outbreak began in the Rockland area when seven unvaccinated travelers diagnosed with measles entered the county last October. There have been 153 cases to date, Day said. In the early days of the outbreak, people were cooperating with health officials and getting children vaccinated, he said, but that has changed.

"Our health inspectors have been hung up on and told not to call again. They've been told, 'We're not discussing this, do not come back,' when visiting the homes of infected individuals as part of their investigations," Day said. "This type of response is unacceptable and frankly irresponsible." On the same day as the federal judge's ruling on

the school children, pediatric organizations expressed support for state legislation that would allow minors to get vaccinated without parental consent.

The state legislation's Democratic sponsors said too many parents believe unsupported claims that vaccines are unsafe and cause autism or other conditions. Day echoed that message, noting celebrities who have spoken out against vaccines.

"If you're going to People magazine and Jenny McCarthy and Robert De Niro for your medical advice, you need to re-evaluate your life," he said.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention lists six measles outbreaks, defined as three or more cases, around the country in 2019, including Rockland County's. The CDC said the outbreaks are linked to travelers who brought the

disease back from other countries, such as Israel and Ukraine, where large measles outbreaks are occurring.

There have been 181 confirmed cases of measles in Brooklyn and Queens since October, most of them involving members of the Orthodox Jewish community, according to the CDC.

Day said the emergency order was timed with the upcoming religious holidays of Easter and Passover in mind. "We want people to be able to celebrate," he said. "We don't want to see a repeat of how this outbreak started when we saw people gathered together and then fall ill last fall."

The CDC says 15 states have had at least one case of measles confirmed in 2019, for a total of 314 cases to date. In 2014, 667 cases were confirmed nationwide and there were 372 cases in 2018. □

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## UK government defiant as Parliament takes control of Brexit

By JILL LAWLESS  
DANICA KIRKA  
Associated Press

**LONDON (AP)** — British lawmakers were preparing to blow open the Brexit process and put a host of rejected options back on the table — including keeping the U.K. close to the European Union or even remaining a member — as Prime Minister Theresa May defiantly insisted Tuesday that Parliament should approve her twice-defeated divorce deal instead.

Lawmakers are scheduled to vote Wednesday on multiple flavors of Brexit, after the House of Commons voted to wrest the parliamentary timetable away from May's weakened government and hold votes on alternatives to her rejected withdrawal agreement.

The largely pro-EU legislators behind the unprecedented move hope to find a form of Brexit that can command a majority in Parliament. Votes are due to be held Wednesday on options that could include remaining in the EU's single market and customs union, calling a new membership referendum and canceling Brexit — all ideas that May has repeatedly rejected. They plan to see which ideas have the most support, and then hold another day of votes next week to try to find agreement on a proposal.

The government, which usually controls the scheduling of votes in Parliament, said the lawmakers' move "upends the balance between our democratic institutions and sets a dangerous, unpredictable precedent for the future."



European Parliament Brexit chief Guy Verhofstadt speaks during a press conference at the European Parliament in Strasbourg, France, Tuesday March 26, 2019.

Associated Press

The votes will not be legally binding, and Health Secretary Matt Hancock told the BBC that the government wouldn't "pre-commit" to accepting the option backed by lawmakers because they may come up with a plan that is impractical. It's also possible lawmakers could support contradictory options, or none at all.

"If the Commons voted for the sun to rise in the west, the government would not be able to implement that," he said.

"The best way through this impasse is the one deal that has been negotiated with the EU that can be delivered quickly now," Hancock said, referring to the prime minister's agreement. But government officials acknowledged they were no longer in control of Brexit. May's authority was hanging by a thread after

30 members of her Conservative Party defied her instructions and voted late Monday for Parliament to take control of the process. Three government ministers resigned rather than vote with the government.

Almost three years after Britons voted to leave the EU, the date and terms of its departure are up in the air. Last week, the EU granted Britain a delay to the scheduled March 29 exit date, saying that if Parliament approved the proposed divorce deal, the U.K. would leave the EU on May 22. If not, the government has until April 12 to tell the 27 remaining EU countries what it plans to do — leave without a deal, cancel Brexit or propose a radically new path.

EU officials, exasperated by months of British political gridlock, welcomed Parliament's move to take con-

control. The EU legislature's top Brexit official, Guy Verhofstadt, said the U.K. lawmakers' votes could dramatically alter the course of the U.K.'s departure.

"It is possible now to work in Britain toward a cross-party alliance," he said.

May continued to push for approval of her deal with the EU even though the House of Commons overwhelmingly rejected it during votes in January and March.

The government said it might be possible to hold a third vote on the agreement Thursday, but only if it looked like there was a reasonable chance it might pass.

That appeared unlikely after the small but influential Democratic Unionist Party from Northern Ireland, which props up May's minority government, refused

to water down its opposition to the withdrawal agreement. The DUP controls 10 crucial votes in the House of Commons, and many hard-line Brexit supporters may follow the party's lead when deciding how to vote.

DUP Brexit spokesman Sammy Wilson wrote in the Daily Telegraph that his party couldn't support May's "toxic" deal. He said delaying Brexit by up to a year would be preferable to "volunteering to be locked into the prison of the withdrawal deal with the cell door key in the pocket of Michel Barnier," the EU's chief negotiator.

May has warned pro-Brexit legislators that continuing to reject the deal could lead to a "slow Brexit" that postpones the country's departure indefinitely, Jacob Rees-Mogg, a leading pro-Brexit Conservative, acknowledged that "the choice seems to be Mrs. May's deal or no Brexit."

"I have always thought that 'no deal' is better than Mrs. May's deal, but Mrs. May's deal is better than not leaving at all," he said on the Conservative Home podcast.

Some members of the public, meanwhile, are losing patience with the parliamentary process and the fading promises made by pro-Brexit politicians.

"It's a little bit similar to the way that when you're in quite a good nightclub and then a friend of yours says ... 'I know somewhere else to go' and then you all leave and then you realize you can't get into the other club," said tech executive Russell Robinson. □



# EU parliament backs copyright bill targeting US tech giants

By RAF CASERT

Associated Press

STRASBOURG, France (AP)

— European Union lawmakers approved a copyright bill Tuesday to give writers and artists more protection of their creative rights and incomes, an intensely contentious measure that could have major trans-Atlantic implications for American technology companies.

The European Parliament voted 348-274 to pass the bill, and there were 36 abstentions. It now goes to the EU's member countries for final consideration next month, but already received provisional approval. The legislation has been in the works for three years. Opponents argued it would stifle freedom and creativity online.

German EU lawmaker Axel Voss, who was the bill's lead backer, let out a massive sigh when the vote tally flashed up on a screen inside the European Parliament building in Strasbourg, France.

"We have agreed a new set of rules which will do exactly the opposite of killing the internet," Voss said.

If the bill is enacted, companies such as Apple, Facebook and Google parent company Alphabet likely would have to pay European artists more and do more to keep work that appears online from being used without permission. The most controversial section would make companies responsible for copy-



Axel Voss, Member of the European Parliament and rapporteur of the copyright bill, poses for the media at the European Parliament in Strasbourg, France, Tuesday March 26, 2019.

Associated Press

righted material that is uploaded to their platforms.

"Web giants have been able to benefit from content created in Europe by paying derisory taxes, transferring huge profits to the U.S. or China," European Parliament President Antonio Tajani said. "Parliament has chosen to put an end to the existing digital Wild West."

Lobbying against the bill by internet giants was said to be so intense even after EU members gave their provisional support last month that the bill's passage wasn't considered a sure thing Tuesday.

After the vote, Google said in a statement that the bill "will still lead to legal uncertainty and will hurt Europe's

creative and digital economies. The details matter, and we look forward to working with policy makers, publishers, creators and rights holders as EU member states move to implement these new rules."

Tens of thousands of people marched in cities across Germany over the week-

end to protest what the EU sees as reforms and critics fear as changes that could lead to online censorship.

Outside parliament, a French band performed music to push the point that artists need higher payments and better copyright protection.

"There is nothing like free

lunch, and I don't know why the giant techs should carry on, you know, having a free lunch on our expense," French music producer Wally Badarou said.

In France, ever the guardian of European culture, the government greeted the bill's passage with relief.

"The EU message is clear," French Culture Minister Franck Riester said. "Everyone intervening on the European market must respect our common preferences, whether it is copyright or fiscal rules" that require America's tech companies to pay more taxes in Europe.

The leader of the EU parliament's liberal ALDE group, Guy Verhofstadt of Belgium, countered the bill's critics by saying the cards had been stacked so much in favor of "monopolistic American companies" that it was ridiculous to talk about a free internet.

"The only freedom you have is to send your data mainly to U.S. companies who are using it for their profit. That is all," Verhofstadt said during Tuesday's session. □

## Austrian far-right activist probed over ties to NZ suspect

BERLIN (AP) — Austrian authorities have searched the home of a prominent far-right activist as part of a probe into his ties to the alleged Christchurch mosque gunman, officials said Tuesday.

Martin Sellner, head of the white nationalist group Identitarian Movement of Austria, said on social media that police searched

his apartment Monday and seized electronic devices after he received a "disproportionately high donation" from a person named Tarrant — the same surname as the suspected Christchurch shooter.

The group is close to sections of the nationalist Freedom Party, which is part of the country's coalition government. □

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# Algerian army chief wants president declared unfit to lead

By AOMAR OUALI

**ALGIERS, Algeria (AP)** — Algeria's powerful army chief said Tuesday he wants to trigger the constitutional process that would declare President Abdelaziz Bouteflika unfit for office, after more than a month of mass protests against the ailing leader's long rule.

The Algerian army's chief of staff is one of the country's top power brokers, so the announcement by Gen. Ahmed Gaid Salah could pave the way for Bouteflika's ouster after 20 years in power — or lead to a showdown with the president's closest protectors.

The 82-year-old Bouteflika has rarely been seen in public since a 2013 stroke.

Gaid Salah said in remarks carried on Algerian television that "the only guarantee for political stability" is to apply the article of the Algerian Constitution that empowers the Constitutional Council to determine



In this April 28, 2014 file photo, Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika sits in a wheelchair after taking oath as President, in Algiers.

Associated Press

if the president is too ill to fully exercise his functions and to ask lawmakers to declare him unfit.

If the request receives two-thirds majority approval in parliament, the Senate president takes charge

of the government until a presidential election can be held, according to the constitutional procedure.

Some protesters have called for the application of Article 102 during massive demonstrations that

have been held in Algeria every Friday since Feb. 22.

They accuse Bouteflika and his entourage of corruption, hoarding the gas-rich country's wealth and being out of touch with the concerns of ordinary Algerians,

especially struggling youth. "In this context, it becomes necessary, even imperative, to adopt a solution to get out of the crisis which reflects the legitimate demands of the Algerian people," Gaid Salah said in his televised address from a military base in the southern city of Ouargla.

Gaid Salah has served as Bouteflika's public defender so his remarks came as a particular surprise. However, another crucial figure, Constitutional Council President Tayeb Belaiz, is a close friend of Bouteflika, who had served as interior minister before becoming a presidential aide. He has headed the Constitutional Council since February.

Several opposition parties quickly reacted to the proposal, with the Rally for Culture and Democracy denouncing what it called "an attempted coup d'etat."

"Gaid Salah is part of our misfortune." □

# IS attack on US-backed fighters kills 7 in northern Syria

Associated Press

**BEIRUT (AP)** — The Islamic State group claimed responsibility for an attack on a checkpoint of U.S.-backed forces in the northern Syrian town of Manbij that killed seven fighters on Tuesday.

The attack indicates that IS can still launch deadly insurgent strikes and is far from being completely defeated, despite losing all the territory it once controlled in Iraq and Syria. Islamic State militants were blamed for several attacks in recent months in and around Manbij, which was declared liberated in 2016. Sharfan Darwish of the Manbij Military Council told The Associated Press that the attack came shortly after midnight at one of the entrances to Manbij, targeting the fighters who "were carrying out their mission of protecting" the town.

The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a war monitoring group, said an IS sleeper



In this March 28, 2018 file photo, a Syrian fighter from the Kurdish police force, guards the entrance of the Manbij Military Council, the Kurdish-led, US-backed, militia group that defends Manbij, Syria.

Associated Press

cell carried out the attack, and that three other Manbij Military Council fighters were wounded.

In its claim of responsibility, IS said its followers targeted

a checkpoint on the western edge of Manbij and confiscated the weapons of the U.S.-backed fighters.

In January, IS claimed a suicide attack in Manbij that

killed 19 people, including two U.S. soldiers and two American civilians.

The fate of Manbij has been a source of tension between the U.S. and Tur-

key, which says the Manbij Military Council is linked to its Kurdish insurgency.

Turkey insists on the withdrawal of the Syrian Kurdish-led militia, which liberated Manbij from the Islamic State group in 2016. In a separate development, Russia and Syria urged the U.S. to discuss the evacuation of a refugee camp in southern Syria. The Russian and Syrian refugee return coordination centers said the U.S. ignored their invitation to attend Tuesday's meeting on the closure of the Rukban camp near the Jordanian border. They said in a statement that the meeting included tribal leaders from the camp and U.N. officials. Russia and Syria say the camp's residents are suffering from malnutrition and disease and should be allowed to leave for government-controlled areas. They criticized the U.S. for taking an "unconstructive" stance and denying entry to the camp. The U.S. says it has allowed aid delivery to Rukban. □



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## 'Second disaster' warned in Mozambique as cholera a concern

By **NCOBILE NTSANGASE**

Associated Press

**BEIRA, Mozambique (AP)**

— Cyclone-ravaged Mozambique faces a "second disaster" from cholera and other diseases, the World Health Organization warned on Tuesday, while relief operations pressed into rural areas where an unknown number of people remain without aid more than 10 days after the storm.

Some 1.8 million people in Mozambique need urgent help after Cyclone Idai, the United Nations said in an emergency appeal for \$282 million for the next three months.

The death toll in Mozambique from the cyclone has risen to 468, according to Mozambican authorities cited by the Portuguese news agency Lusa. There are also 259 dead in Zimba-



A family stand outside their submerged huts near Nhamatanda, about 130km from Beira, in Mozambique, Tuesday, March, 26, 2019.

Associated Press

bwe and at least 56 dead in Malawi.

Cyclone Idai was "one of the worst weather-related catastrophes in the history of Africa," U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres told reporters in New York. He raised the specter of

hunger, saying the storm inundated Mozambique's breadbasket on the eve of harvest.

The death toll remained at least 761 in Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Malawi, and authorities have warned it is "very prelimi-

nary." More bodies will be found as floodwaters drain away.

Emergency responders raced to contain deadly diseases such as cholera, which authorities have said will break out as more than a quarter-million displaced people shelter in camps with little or no clear water and sanitation. Many wells were contaminated by the floods.

People are living in tent camps, schools, churches, roads and other impromptu places on higher ground. Many have little but their clothes, squatting over cooking fires and picking their way around stretches of increasingly dirty water or simply walking through it, resigned.

The World Health Organization said it is expecting a "spike" in malaria cases in Mozambique. The disease-

carrying mosquitoes breed in standing water.

WHO also said 900,000 oral cholera vaccines were expected to arrive later this week. Cholera is caused by eating contaminated food or drinking water and can kill within hours. Cases of diarrhea have been reported.

"We must not let these people suffer a second disaster through a serious disease outbreak or inability to access essential health services. They have suffered enough," Dr. Djamila Cabral, the WHO Representative in Mozambique, told reporters in Geneva.

She said people in camps were living in "horrific conditions" and that about 55 health centers had been severely damaged.

Aid continued to arrive, including much-needed air support. □

## China ex-internet czar sentenced to 14 years for corruption

Associated Press

**BEIJING (AP)**

— China's former internet censor, who once held high-profile meetings with industry leaders such as Apple CEO Tim Cook and Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg, was sentenced to 14 years in prison on corruption charges Tuesday.

The Intermediate People's Court in the eastern city of Ningbo said Lu Wei had confessed to accepting 32 million yuan (\$4.6 million) in bribes. It said he expressed remorse and vowed not to appeal his sentence.

Lu helped lead the ruling Communist Party's tightening of controls over domestic cyberspace and championed Beijing's stance that governments have a right to filter and censor internet access.

China has 700 million people online, but authorities impose heavy controls on political content and sites related to gambling and pornography. Social media sites such as Facebook and Google also are blocked.

In its ruling, the Ningbo court said Lu had abused his authority in various positions, including as a deputy propaganda minister and as head of a government internet security advisory body, accepting gifts in return for favors.

Lu took a hard line in demanding tough security checks on imported foreign tech products and censoring foreign internet companies and social networks like Facebook in the name of preserving social stability.

He worked his way up the

ranks of China's official Xinhua News Agency from a reporting job in the southern city of Guilin in the early 1990s to become the agency's vice president from 2004 to 2011. He was vice mayor of Beijing from 2011 to 2013.

A report by the government broadcaster CCTV gave few details. But earlier reports said Lu also had engaged in factionalism and "selectively enforced" the party's "strategic arrangements on internet work."

President Xi Jinping has carried out a wide-ranging crackdown on corruption that observers say is calculated to strengthen party control while bringing down potential challengers to his authority.

One of the officials and



In this Sept. 23, 2015, file photo, China's Internet czar Lu Wei attends a gathering of CEOs and other executives at Microsoft's main campus in Redmond, Wash.

Associated Press

military leaders ensnared in the anti-graft campaign was the former president of Interpol, Meng Hongwei, who vanished after traveling to China from France, where the global anti-crime

body is headquartered. The government says Meng is under investigation for graft and possible other crimes. There are heavy suspicions he had fallen out of political favor with Xi. □

# Mexico president calls for truth commission on conquest

By **MARK STEVENSON**

**Associated Press**

**MEXICO CITY (AP)** — Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador asked Spain on Tuesday to set up a kind of fact-finding commission on the 1519-1521 conquest of Mexico to determine what kind of apology is warranted.

Spanish Foreign Minister Josep Borrell quickly knocked the idea down, saying, "Obviously Spain will not issue these apologies that have been requested."

"It seems a little strange that apologies are being demanded now for things that happened 500 years ago" Borrell said during a trip to Argentina. "In the same sense that we are not going to demand that France apologize for the actions of Napoleon's soldiers when they invaded Spain"

Lopez Obrador's proposal to stir up old ghosts has drawn some puzzled reactions in Mexico as well. Some wondered if Mexico would demand apologies from France or the United States — both of which also invaded Mexico — and some noted Lopez Obrador's grandfather was Spanish.

Lopez Obrador said he



In this Friday, March 8, 2019 file photo, Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador answers questions from journalists at his daily 7 a.m. press conference at the National Palace in Mexico City.

**Associated Press**

wants the commission to determine what abuses were committed, so Spain can apologize. Most of Mexico's indigenous population died within decades after the Spanish arrived, largely by diseases carried from Europe.

"What we want to see is if we can put together a joint group to do some fact-finding about what happened, and humbly, based on that, accept our mis-

takes," Lopez Obrador said Tuesday. "That way, we will know what happened 500 years ago, how things happened, if there were abuses or not."

Few would seriously doubt there were abuses by Spanish conquistador Hernan Cortes from the time he fought his first battle against Chontal Indians in Tabasco around March 25, 1519, marking the start of what Mexicans call "The

Conquest."

But the Spanish government has argued that "the arrival, 500 years ago, of Spaniards to what is today Mexican territory cannot be judged in the light of contemporary considerations."

For about a century, Mexico had been willing to let slide the assessment of historic guilt associated with the Conquest.

The official philosophy was

stated on a plaque erected in the 1960s at Mexico City's Tlatelolco Square, commemorating the final battle on August 13, 1521, when the Aztec empire fell to the Spaniards.

"It was neither a triumph or a defeat, it was the painful birth of the mestizo (mixed-race) country that is Mexico," the plaque reads.

Indeed, prior to Lopez Obrador's demand Monday for an apology from Spain, most Mexicans appeared content to let the anniversary pass unheeded.

Rosa Maria Gonzalez Moreno, 61, a primary teacher, had walked by Mexico City's Jesus Nazareno church for years and never knew it held Cortes' tomb.

In fact, the metal plaque marking what is thought to be Cortes' final resting place is barely visible near the altar. It wasn't until a week ago, when Gonzalez Moreno attended the rehearsal for her godson's first communion, that another parishioner told her about the tomb.

"Imagine, I walked by here every day for years and never knew it was where Cortes was buried," said Gonzalez Moreno. "You have to learn about history, the good and the bad." □

# Ex-Brazilian President Temer released from jail after 5 days

By **DIANE JEANTET**

**MAURICIO SAVARESE**

**Associated Press**

**RIO DE JANEIRO (AP)** — Former Brazilian President Michel Temer was released from jail on Monday, less than a week after he was arrested in the sprawling Car Wash corruption probe that has ensnared many of the country's top politicians and business leaders. Temer, who will still face several corruption charges while free, left his cell in a facility near Rio de Janeiro for an undisclosed location after an order from a federal judge.

Judge Antonio Ivan Athie said earlier there's no need to jail the 78-year-old politician because he doesn't pose a risk to the investigation into the charges.

The backroom dealmaker and seven other people were jailed on Thursday on corruption charges in a decision that even some of his adversaries criticized. At the time, Judge Marcelo Bretas argued they be held so they couldn't destroy evidence.

Federal prosecutors said they will appeal Athie's decision and seek a new arrest of the unpopular former president.

Temer became president in August 2016 after President Dilma Roussef was impeached and removed from office, and his term ended on Jan. 1, when President Jair Bolsonaro was sworn in.

His administration was clouded by corruption allegations, though on two

occasions, lawmakers refused to authorize prosecution of Temer. In Brazil, the prosecution of a sitting president requires a vote of Congress.

Athie's ruling could still be reversed by his colleagues on the same court, which had been expected to decide on Temer's future only on Wednesday.

"As I examined the case I verified that there is no justification to wait for two more days for the decision," the judge said.

The ruling also said Bretas' decision to arrest Temer was based on "assumptions on old facts."

The Car Wash probes also led to the jailing of former President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, who is serving a 12-year sentence corrup-



In this June 1, 2018 file photo, Brazil's President Michel Temer pauses during a speech at the Planalto Presidential Palace, in Brasilia, Brazil.

**Associated Press**

tion and money laundering.

Once hugely popular, Da Silva, who governed between 2003 and 2010, has

only left his prison cell in the city of Curitiba to testify in other suits and to attend his 7-year-old grandson's funeral earlier in February. □

# LOCAL



## University of Aruba hosts International Island Conference: "Island issues differ completely from mainland issues"

ORANJESTAD – Today the first "International Conference on Small Island States and Sub-National Island Jurisdictions" started at the University of Aruba till 29th of March. The conference is organized in collaboration with the Centre of Excellence for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (COE) and the UNESCO Chair in Island Studies and Sustainability, which is shared between the University of Prince Edward Island (UPEI) in Canada and the University of Malta. The conference's international planning committee is chaired by UNESCO co-chair, Dr. Jim Randall (UPEI). "It is important that people understand the importance of islands and the fact that islands are very different from the mainland."

He explains that if people try to use mainland solutions to solve island problems 'you will run into walls'. "We are facilitators, we bring people together around the world to allow



them to tell their own story and use their own voices. This conference is here, because we believe that islands are important, not just for their own development but, they have lessons to tell to other islands and the mainland."

### Invisible Islands

How islands are governed can be learned from and applied to other places. Dr. Randall says that too often, the thought of islands being dependent states exists. "Aruba and Prince Edward Island are

semi-autonomous, having a vague kind of relationship with other states and other governments." Sometimes they seem to be invisible and one of our tasks is to make islands like Aruba count more, he states. The purpose of the conference is to bring people from this area together. About 90 people signed up to participate. "It is important for Aruba to be involved in this conference as well for us to hear the challenges Aruba faces and the solutions the island found to solve those problems."

Local co-hosts include Arno Boersma and Francielle Laclé from the COE, Deborah Alexander from the Centre for Lifelong Learning at University of Aruba, and Glenn Thodé, Rector of the U of A, and Patrick Arens, Business Director. The planning committee comprises scholars from several academic institutions including the University of the West Indies, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, University of Malta, Leiden University, and University of the West of England.

### Unique Aspects

Rector Thode explains that this event initiated in 2017 when Dr. Randall approached him to help and organize a conference in Sint Maarten. Unfortunately the hurricane Irma hit the island and caused enormous damage to the infrastructure. "Good governance is needed for a just society, for ensuring human rights and for empowering citizens. This applies to all sectors of society, from public to

private, NGOs, and academia. What are the aspects unique to island territories? How do the institutional structures on Small Island States assist or limit the ability to meet the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals? We hope to engage with many on this unique event that will create a platform bringing to light these inquiries."

Dr. Randall: "How islands govern themselves and the relations they negotiate with other jurisdictions has a major impact on their sustainable development. This conference brings together international, regional and local experts on island life to share their ideas and research results. I am especially excited to compare development perspectives from independent island states with those from island territories."

On Thursday there will be a free public forum, people can register at the University of Aruba website. Be on time, seats are limited. □

## Beyond Asian Culinary

PALM BEACH — There is a journey you may take this coming weekend and it will lead you beyond the obvious. Aruba Marriott Resort & Stellaris Casino is known for its super ambience lobby bar that will now take you on a trip through Asia. The eating culture in this part of the world may be called the most diverse and tasteful of all and this delight is to be tasted in Aruba.

A fusion of flavors will enchant you while tasting a variety of Asian flavored fusions. Offerings among others are a selection of sushi rolls, oysters, prime short ribs, tuna tartare roll, salmon and some great



secret cocktails with names like Kimono or Geisha to accompany these happy surprises. The Lobby is a great place to start

of your weekend, so tune into Secrety -that's how this Asian experience is called- and simply unwind. Enjoy. Let go. Do Asian.

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# Global Money Week – Aruba



ORANJESTAD — The 2nd edition of Global Money week Aruba (GMW) presented by the Centrale Bank of Aruba is ready to start. This will take place from April 2nd until April 5th, 2019. A total of 700 students will be taking part in this event where they will learn different financial topics in an interactive way.

The topics are about our currency, the history and characteristics of it, how to save, how to manage money responsibly, innovative ideas and the importance of giving back to the community. School children of the 5th and 6th grade of different elementary schools will undertake a scavenger

hunt at downtown San Nicolas. During the scavenger hunt the school children will be passing through 7 stations and learn, earn, save, spend, share, innovate and discover.

The Central Bank of Aruba joined forces with different financial institutions on the island to make this event possible: Aruba Bank, Banco di Caribe, Caribbean Mercantile Bank, CIBC First Caribbean, RBC, Ennia, Fundacion Museo Arubano, FUTURA, IDEA, Guardian Group, Kiwanis Club of Aruba, Setar and Qredits.

Follow the Facebook page Global Money Week Aruba for more information. □

# Aruba Home Minders, Offers convenient, affordable alternatives for AirBnB

ORANJESTAD — Homeowners can now enjoy the many advantages of managing their own rentals remotely while having the “peace of mind in paradise” that comes with knowing their guests, and home are being cared for by a friendly team of professionals.

Originally from the USA Judith Lembo established Aruba Home Minders NV in 2007 as a full service Real Estate/ Property management company.

“Our slogan “Your Peace of Mind in Paradise” is more than a catchy phrase. It is our mission statement and what I have built my business on.” Says proprietor Judith Lembo. “The absentee and 2nd home owner has always been the main focus of my business. As the industry evolves and the needs of 2nd homeowners in Aruba change I have made it my business to change and evolve with them. The AirBnB sector is growing quickly in Aruba & it is very important for the island that the



standards remain high, the homeowners are in compliance with local tax laws, the homes are cared for, and above all the guests have a wonderful experience.” In addition to the standard Property management and Rental services that many companies offer on island, Aruba Home Minders also provides flexible and affordable guest service options. The a la carte guest services are the perfect solution for the hands on AirBnB/ vacation rental owners who prefer to man-

age their own reservations but need a helping hand locally. Aruba Home Minders a la carte guest services include: Meet & Greet/ check in, check out & departure inspection, cleaning & guest supplies, emergency contact, registration & submission of monthly tax sheets.

For more information, testimonials, and a full list of services please contact Judy at: info@arubahomeminders.com or by phone 733-4663 Aruba/ 973-988-4363 USA □

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For today's newspaper we received a great picture from

**Donald Alhart. He wrote:**  
**Aruba to me is...**  
**Celebration of Friendship!!**

Alhart celebrated the Flag Day together with good friends. They met a decade ago at the Marriott Surf Club and their friendship is being renewed every year since then at their home away from home.



## Stars of the Bolshoi Ballet

ORANJESTAD — Nine big stars from the Russian Ballet are here to perform live for you. This coming Thursday and Friday you will have the unique opportunity to enjoy the high level classic Russian ballet show “Stars of the Bolshoi Ballet”.

Some of the most well-known names of the Russian ballet will show their skills at our national theatre Cas di Cultura. Alexander Volchkov who is the principal dancer of Bolshoi, Ekaterina Borchenko who is Prima Ballerina of the imperial theatre of Mikhailovsky, Oksana Bondareva who is international star of the Mariinsky are part of this excellent company. They will show their interpretation of the famous Swan Lake, Nutcracker, Don Quijote and Le Corsaire during a spectacular show of the highest level.

Tickets are available at Cas di Cultura (Facebook Cas di Cultura)



## Tickle your Taste Buds with Tierra del Sol



NOORD — There is a place on the Northern part of the island that makes up for your perfect dream night. The location: the island’s rugged north coast and blue ocean forming your panoramic from Tierra del Sol’s restaurant, either from the poolside outdoor terrace or from the elegant indoor restaurant. The offering: From breakfast to dinner excellent cuisine, friendly service, and a gorgeous setting, but now

even more special with the NEW ‘All You Can Taste’ concept – on from Tuesdays to Saturdays from 6PM – 10PM.

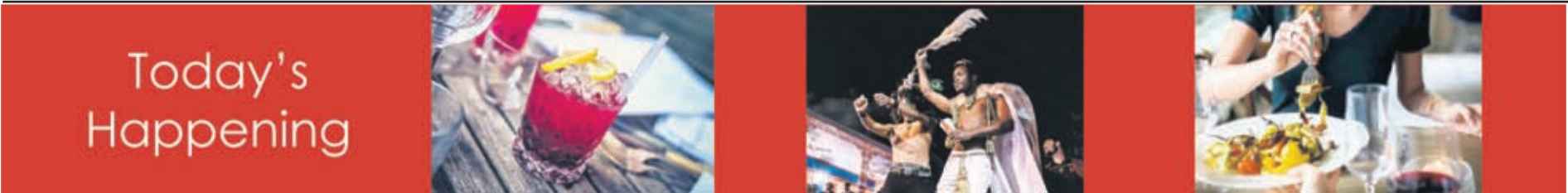
Tune in for an experience that will give dining another perspective. We are not talking about the standard 3-course menu, but about a journey through taste-land. The Restaurant at Tierra del Sol invites you to taste as many tapa-sized

items as you wish from their extensive fine dining menu. Fresh Oysters, Tuna Crab Duo, Bruchetta Caprese, Portobello Mushroom, Smoked Beef Tataki or Chicken Curry Waldorf Salad are only some of the welcoming dishes. For the main courses you can decide for Skirt Steak, Duck Venison Duo or Pumpkin Risotto among others and to top it off with a sweet surrender a Duo of Quesillo & Brownie, Melon

Martini or Cheesecake are one of the choices. This all for a special price and including a glass of sangria. Indulge into this culinary discovery at the most romantic scenery of our One Happy Island.

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 Email: restaurant@tierradelsol.com  
 Tuesday – Saturday 8:00am – 10:00pm  
 Sunday 11:00am – 3:00pm





## A weekly calendar with a selection of what's going on in Aruba



### Wednesday 27

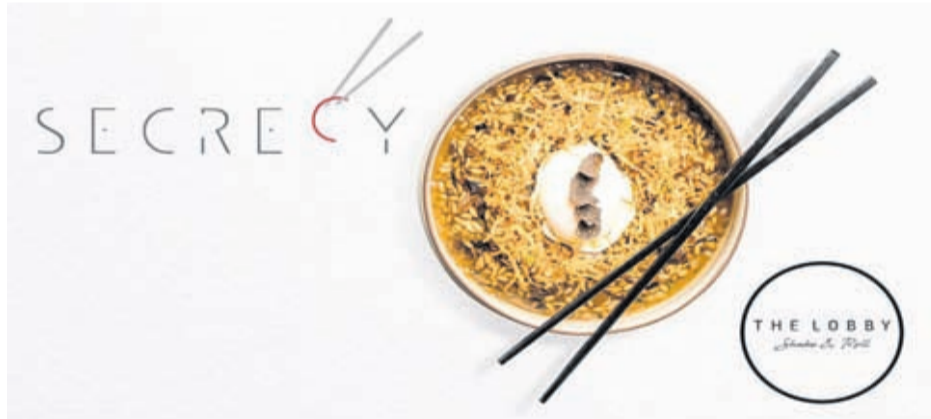
#### A Tribute to Frida Kahlo ~ Poetry Night

- Enjoy a poetic night resembling the life of Frida Kahlo. Frida Kahlo de Rivera was a Mexican artist who painted many portraits, self-portraits and works inspired by the nature and artifacts of Mexico. "I leave you my portrait so that you will have my presence all the days and nights that I am away from you"
- From 7:00 PM- 11:00 PM
- Lola Taqueria (located in front of Hilton Hotel in Palm Beach)
- Facebook: Basha Foundation

### Thursday 28

#### Free Public Lecture

- The University of Aruba will be hosting a lecture called "Sharing Stories of Island Life, Governance and Global Engagement" presented by Keynote Speaker Godfrey Baldacchino
- From 7:00 PM - 10:00 pm
- University of Aruba
- Facebook: University of Aruba



### Friday 29

#### Secrecy- Asian Cuisine

- Delight yourself with a variety of Asian flavored fusions from "A Secret Menu" especially prepared to entice your culinary senses. Indulge in the fusion flavors of Asian Cuisine.
- From 7:00 PM
- The Lobby at Aruba Marriott Resort & Stellaris Casino
- Facebook: Aruba Marriott Resort & Stellaris Casino

### Saturday 30

#### Earth Hour Annual Walk

- Join The Ritz-Carlton, Aruba for our Annual Walk honoring Earth Hour. The walk will be from The Ritz-Carlton, Aruba to California Lighthouse. Wear white and come with your family and friends to this exciting and complimentary event. Bring your water bottle and flashlight!
- From 6:30PM- 9:30PM
- The Ritz-Carlton Aruba
- Facebook: The Ritz-Carlton Aruba



### Sunday 31

#### Premiere of Journey of my Shadow

- A theatrical play based on a real life story of 2 addicts with the purpose to serve as a wake-up call to the entire community of the issues regarding living on the streets.
- From 7:30 PM
- Cas di Cultura, Oranjestad
- Facebook: Ruta di Mi Sombra



### Monday 1

#### Kids Clay workshop

- Learn how to make historical artifacts inspired by Aruba's cultural heritage and monuments out of clay. For kids ages 8-14
- 4:00 PM- 5:30 PM
- Koningstraat 38, Rancho, Oranjestad
- Facebook: Centro Actividad Rancho



### Tuesday 2

#### The Restaurant at Tierra del Sol

- All you can taste night at The Restaurant at Tierra del Sol. Experience as many 'Tapas' size items as you wish from their extensive fine dining menu.
- From 6:00 PM till 10:00 PM
- Tierra del Sol Aruba
- Facebook Tierra del Sol

# SPORTS



## IOC must wield big stick to clean up weightlifting

**PARIS (AP)** — No carrots. To save weightlifting from the rot of doping, the International Olympic Committee must continue to wield the big stick.

When initial drug testing came back negative from the most recent world championships, it fleetingly seemed that weightlifting might be starting to turn a corner. Perhaps the fight launched against the sport's steroid culture, laid bare by more than 50 positive tests from the 2008 and 2012 Olympic Games, was bearing fruit? Maybe IOC pressure and a vague threat to possibly exclude weightlifting from future Olympic competition had helped steer dopers away from their needles and pills? Wishful thinking. When those world championship drug-test samples were then subjected to deeper scrutiny using additional laboratory analysis and sophisticated computer algorithms, a grimmer picture emerged that shot holes in the notion of a sport on the mend. The follow-up testing snared at least eight lifters, all from Thailand, including three who won world titles in November and four others who also won medals. Two of them are Olympic champions from the 2016 Rio Games, including one who had previously been banned for steroid use for two years. Clearly, then, some lifters still aren't getting the message that because of systematic doping, they and their sport are on a slippery slope toward becoming an irrelevancy and a joke.

Continued on Page 23



## Jazz cruise to a 125-92 victory despite Booker's 59

Phoenix Suns guard Devin Booker (1) goes to the basket as Utah Jazz forward Thabo Sefolosa (22) defends during the first half of an NBA basketball game Monday, March 25, 2019, in Salt Lake City.

# Conor McGregor announces retirement on social media

By GREG BEACHAM

AP Sports Writer

**LOS ANGELES (AP)** — UFC superstar Conor McGregor announced his retirement on social media Monday night, abruptly ending his remarkable fighting career. In a post on his verified Twitter account, the former UFC featherweight and lightweight champion said: "I've decided to retire from the sport formally known as 'Mixed Martial Art' today." The post wishes his "old colleagues well going forward in competition," and says he would "join my former partners on this venture, already in retirement. Proper Pina Coladas on me fellas!" The name of the drink in the post appears to be a reference to Proper No. Twelve Whiskey, the loquacious Irishman's burgeoning liquor venture.

UFC President Dana White said in a text message to The Associated Press that McGregor's announcement "totally makes sense." "He has the money to retire, and his whiskey is KILLIN' it," White added. "If I was him, I would retire too. He's retiring from fighting. Not from working. The Whiskey will keep him busy, and I'm sure he has other things he's working on. He has been so fun to watch!!! He has accomplished incredible things in this sport. I am so happy for him and I look forward to seeing him be as successful outside of the octagon as he was in it."

The 30-year-old McGregor is the most famous fighter in his sport, but he hasn't won a fight since November 2016, when he beat Eddie Alvarez to become the first UFC fighter to hold championship belts in two divisions simultaneously.

His only fight in 2017 was a loss to boxer Floyd Mayweather in the richest fight in boxing history. He finally returned to the UFC cage last October, but lost a lightweight title fight to Khabib Nurmagomedov via submission in the fourth round.

McGregor was widely expected to fight for the UFC later this year. A few hours before he announced his

retirement, McGregor appeared on "The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon" in New York and claimed he was negotiating for a probable fight in July at UFC 239 in Las Vegas.

"I don't necessarily need to fight," McGregor said on the show. "I am set for life. My family is set for life. We are good, but I am eager to fight, so we'll see what happens."

McGregor has quit his sport before. He announced his retirement on Twitter in April 2016 during a dispute with the UFC about the promotion of his next proposed bout. He reversed his decision two days later and fought in August 2016, winning his rematch with Nate Diaz.

White believes this retirement is genuine, and McGregor has had plenty of action outside the cage to occupy his time.

In April 2018, McGregor was charged with assault and criminal mischief after he attacked a bus carrying UFC fighters outside Barclays Arena in Brooklyn. McGregor was acting in revenge for a perceived slight against a teammate, and he eventually pleaded no contest to a count of disorderly conduct.

Earlier this month, McGregor was arrested again in Miami Beach for stealing the phone of someone trying to take his photo, authorities said. McGregor was charged with robbery and criminal mischief, but his attorney described the altercation as minor.

McGregor also was suspended from MMA competition for six months and fined \$50,000 for his role in a brawl instigated by Nurmagomedov immediately after their bout last October.

If it sticks, McGregor's retirement ends a remarkable rise for the former plumber from Dublin who became the biggest star in MMA with his heavy fists and self-promotional acumen. He won 15 consecutive fights during his rise, including a spectacular 13-second knockout of Jose Aldo to win the featherweight title in December 2015. □



In this Oct. 6, 2018, file photo, Conor McGregor walks out of the arena after he was defeated by Khabib Nurmagomedov in a lightweight title mixed martial arts bout at UFC 229 in Las Vegas.

Associated Press

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## Murray stays unbeaten in NYC as Pens top Rangers 5-2

**By The Associated Press**  
**NEW YORK (AP)** — Teddy Blueger scored two goals, Matt Murray made 33 saves and the Pittsburgh Penguins surged to a 5-2 win over the New York Rangers on Monday night.

Justin Schultz, Nick Bjugstad and Matt Cullen also scored for Pittsburgh. Phil Kessel and Marcus Pettersson each added two assists.

Murray improved to 6-0-0 against the Rangers in the regular season and 5-0-0 at Madison Square Garden.

Pittsburgh pulled into a tie with the New York Islanders for second place in the Metropolitan Division with 95 points. Both teams trail Washington by one point for first.

Brendan Lemieux and Vinni Lettieri scored for the Rangers. Alexandar Georgiev, coming off a 44-save effort in a 2-1 overtime win Saturday night at Toronto, stopped 31 shots.

### **KINGS 3, FLAMES 0**

**CALGARY, Alberta (AP)** — Backup goaltender Jack Campbell made 42 saves in his second shutout of the season and Los Angeles beat Western Conference-leading Calgary.

Jonny Brodzinski and defenseman Derek Forbort scored, and Tyler Toffoli added an empty-net goal for Los Angeles, which won its third straight.

Campbell earned his first win since Feb. 5 for the Kings, who won't qualify for the postseason.

Flames goaltender Mike Smith made 18 saves.

### **RED WINGS 3, SHARKS 2**

**SAN JOSE, Calif. (AP)** — Dylan Larkin scored in the first minute, Jonathan Bernier had 38 saves and Detroit beat San Jose.

The Red Wings have won four of their last five games after going 1-9-3 over their



Pittsburgh Penguins goaltender Matt Murray (30) blocks a shot by New York Rangers center Brett Howden (21) with his body during the third period of an NHL hockey game in New York, Monday, March 25, 2019.

Associated Press

previous 13.

The Sharks lost their season-high sixth (0-5-1) straight game. It's their longest skid since going 0-6-0 in March 2017.

Andreas Athanasiou and Christoffer Ehn also scored for Detroit.

Evander Kane and Tomas Hertl scored for the Sharks. Martin Jones finished with 20 saves.

**MAPLE LEAFS 7, PANTHERS 5**  
**TORONTO (AP)** — John Tavares had the first four-goal game of his career, leading Toronto to the win over Florida.

Zach Hyman had a goal and two assists, and Patrick Marleau and Jake Muzzin also scored for Toronto. Mitch Marner had three assists, while Morgan Rielly and William Nylander each finished with two assists. Frederik Andersen made 31 saves for the Leafs.

Jayce Hawryluk scored twice and added an assist for Florida. Jonathan Huberdeau added two goals

and Mike Matheson also scored. Evgenii Dadanov and Mike Hoffman each had two assists.

Rookie Sam Montembeault allowed two goals on four shots before getting pulled just over four minutes into game. Roberto Luongo made 28 saves in relief.

### **LIGHTNING 5, BRUINS 4**

**TAMPA, Fla. (AP)** — Steven Stamkos scored twice and finished with four points, and Tampa Bay became the fourth NHL team to win at least 59 games in a season, rallying from two goals down to beat Boston.

With five games left, Tampa Bay (59-14-4) has a chance to surpass the NHL record of 62 wins, set by the 1995-96 Detroit Red Wings. The only other franchise to win at least 59 was the Montreal Canadiens in 1976-77 (60 wins) and 1977-78 (59).

Anthony Cirelli scored the winning goal with 52.4 seconds left as Tampa Bay won when trailing after the second period for the ninth

time this season.

Nikita Kucherov scored his 38th goal to record his 121st point of the year, the second-most by a Russian player in NHL history behind Alex Mogilny, who had 127 in 1992-93. Victor Hedman also scored.

Andrei Vasilevskiy stopped 13 shots for Tampa Bay. Brad Marchand scored twice while Brandon Carlo and Charlie Coyle also scored for Boston. Tuukka Rask finished with 23 saves.

### **DEVILS 3, SABRES 1**

**NEWARK, N.J. (AP)** — Cory Schneider overcame an embarrassing early, bad-hop goal from center ice, made 45 saves and got the benefit of having a game-tying, third-period tally nullified for goaltender interference in leading New Jersey past Buffalo.

Blake Coleman and Pavel Zacha scored power-play goals as New Jersey won its second straight and for the fourth time in 14 games (4-9-1). Miles Wood added

an empty-net goal on a length-of-the-ice shot.

Sam Reinhart scored his 20th of the season for the Sabres and had his 21st taken away by a Devils' challenge. Linus Ullmark made 18 saves as the Sabres fell to 1-9-1 in their last 11.

### **PREDATORS 1, WILD 0**

**ST. PAUL, Minn. (AP)** — Juuse Saros made 29 saves for his third shutout of the season and Ryan Johansen scored a short-handed goal to lead Nashville past Minnesota.

With the victory, the Predators clinched a spot in the Western Conference playoffs. They are in second place in the Central Division, two points behind Winnipeg.

Devan Dubnyk stopped 18 of 19 shots for the Wild, who remain two points out of the last playoff spot in the West with five games to play.

### **STARS 5, JETS 2**

**WINNIPEG, Manitoba (AP)** — Tyler Seguin and Radek Faska each scored a pair of goals and Dallas snapped a two-game losing streak.

Esa Lindell also scored and Alexander Radulov had two assists for the Stars (39-31-6), who maintained their hold on the first wild-card spot in the Western Conference.

Ben Bishop stopped 21 shots.

Kyle Connor had a goal and an assist and Patrik Laine ended a 12-game scoring drought with his 30th goal of the season.

Connor Hellebuyck made 32 saves for the Jets (45-27-4), who are in first place in the Central Division, two points ahead of Nashville, with a game in hand.

### **BLUES 3, GOLDEN KNIGHTS 1**

**ST. LOUIS (AP)** — Ivan Barbashev, Zach Sanford and Ryan O'Reilly scored to help St. Louis beat Vegas. □

## Nurkic suffers severe leg injury, Blazers top Nets in 2 OTs

**By The Associated Press**  
**PORTLAND, Ore. (AP)** — Jusuf Nurkic had 32 points and 16 rebounds before suffering a gruesome left leg injury in the second overtime, and the Portland Trail Blazers outlasted the Brooklyn Nets 148-144 on Monday night.

Nurkic was hurt when his leg bent awkwardly as he battled for an offensive rebound. His leg was immobilized and he was removed on a stretcher while surrounded by members of both teams.

The Blazers pulled out the game without him to clinch a playoff berth, but the loss of its starting center having his best season could be devastating for a Portland team already playing without injured guard CJ McCollum.

Damian Lillard finished with 31 points and 12 assists for Portland, while D'Angelo Russell had 39 points, nine rebounds and eight assists for Brooklyn.

### **JAZZ 125, SUNS 92**

**SALT LAKE CITY (AP)** — Rudy Gobert scored a season-high 27 points and set the single-season NBA dunk record to fuel Utah to a vic-

tory over Phoenix, which got 59 points from Devin Booker.

Booker topped his previous season high of 55, set in December in a triple-overtime loss to Washington. The fourth-year guard made five 3-pointers and shot 19 for 34 despite drawing several double-teams as the Jazz sought to prevent him from reaching 60 points. He also made 16 of 17 free throws.

Derrick Favors and Ricky Rubio each had 18 points and Joe Ingles added 14 as the Jazz won for the seventh time in their last eight games.

### **MAGIC 119, 76ERS 98**

**ORLANDO, Fla. (AP)** — Nikola Vucevic had 28 points and 11 rebounds, and Orlando held Philadelphia without a field goal for a stretch of nearly 12 minutes.

Evan Fournier scored 24 points for the Magic, who outscored the 76ers 30-5 over a second-half stretch in which Philadelphia missed 15 straight shots.

The Magic completed their first 5-0 homestand in franchise history and moved a half-game behind Miami in



Utah Jazz center Rudy Gobert, center, dunks on Phoenix Suns' Deandre Ayton (22) and Troy Daniels (30) during the second half of an NBA basketball game Monday, March 25, 2019, in Salt Lake City.

Associated Press

chasing the eighth playoff spot in the Eastern Conference. They visit the Heat on Tuesday.

Joel Embiid led the 76ers with 20 points and 10 rebounds.

### **GRIZZLIES 115, THUNDER 103**

**MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP)** — Bruno Caboclo scored a career-high 24 points, Ty-

ler Dorsey added 21 and Memphis beat Oklahoma City.

Delon Wright finished with 18 points and a career-best 13 assists for the Grizzlies. Jonas Valanciunas added 18 points and 14 rebounds. All five starters finished in double figures as the Grizzlies ended a two-game

slide.

Paul George led the Thunder with 30 points and 12 rebounds, while Dennis Schroder added 25 points on 9-of-14 shooting. Russell Westbrook finished with 16 points and seven assists, but was just 6 of 20 from the field and missed five of his six 3-point attempts. □

## NFL owners vote down potential onside kick change

**By BARRY WILNER**  
**AP Pro Football Writer**

**PHOENIX (AP)** — NFL owners voted down a proposal to replace the onside kick with one play from scrimmage, and tabled a suggestion to require each team to have one possession in overtime regardless of what happened on the first series of the extra period.

While the owners on Tuesday mulled enhancing the use of video replay in officiating, they vetoed the idea of a one-year trial of a fourth-and-15 play from the

offense's 35-yard line to replace the onside kick, considered one of the game's more dangerous plays. The powerful competition committee recommended the play by a vote of 7-1, but the owners were not swayed.

The overtime change is championed by several clubs after the AFC championship game in January — and the 2017 Super Bowl — ended with a Patriots touchdown without the opponent getting the ball. New England won the coin toss both times.

Currently, the format is a touchdown on the opening possession of OT ends the game, but a field goal allows the other team a series with the ball. If that team also kicks a field goal, the game continues.

Owners will next take up the overtime topic at their May meeting.

Approved on Tuesday, with the owners still meeting:

—Making permanent all kickoff rules implemented only for the 2018 season. Studies showed this player safety initiative worked.

—Eliminating the blindside



New England Patriots head coach Bill Belichick speaks to the media during the NFC/AFC coaches breakfast during the annual NFL football owners meetings, Tuesday, March 26, 2019, in Phoenix.

Associated Press

block in an effort to expand protection of a defenseless player. It is now a 15-yard penalty if a player initiates a block in which he is moving.

—Allowing teams to elect to enforce on an extra point kick or play an opponent's personal or unsportsmanlike conduct foul committed during a touchdown. □



Novak Djokovic, of Serbia, serves to Roberto Bautista Agut, of Spain, during the Miami Open tennis tournament, Tuesday, March 26, 2019, in Miami Gardens, Fla.

Associated Press

## Djokovic upset in 4th round in Miami

MIAMI GARDENS, Fla. (AP)

— Top seed Novak Djokovic was upset by Roberto Bautista Agut 1-6, 7-5, 6-3 in the fourth round of the Miami Open Tuesday. The world No. 1 was looking to win his 850th match but fell short.

Djokovic was leading 6-1, 4-5 when rain delayed play for 30 minutes. Returning to the court, Djokovic surrendered his serve on a second break point in the 12th game to lose the second set.

Djokovic recouped one service break in the third set, but he lost his serve again in the sixth game to fall behind 2-4.

Djokovic holds a 7-3 career record over Bautista Agut, but the Spaniard has now beaten him the past two times they've played.

The 22nd-seeded Bautista Agut defeated Djokovic in a three-set semifinal at the Qatar Open in January.

Earlier in the day, defending champion John Isner advanced to the quarterfinals with a 7-6 (5), 7-6 (3) win over 19th-seeded Kyle Edmund. Isner pounded 17 aces and lost one service game in the match. He surrendered the ninth game of the first set at love.

Isner has played five tie-breakers in six sets during his three match wins. □

# There's a reason Match Play is only once a year

By DOUG FERGUSON

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — Rory McIlroy loves match play because he believes it is the purest form of golf.

Most would agree.

He also prefers single elimination, which he referred to as "straight knockout." In simple terms, lose and go home.

Most players would agree on that, too, with a few exceptions.

It wasn't much fun for Thomas Bjorn, who in two straight appearances flew from Dubai to San Diego and lost after 13 holes of the opening round. And for those who believe the word "upset" doesn't apply at this level of golf, they probably didn't see Ernie Els after he lost in the opening round to Phil Taturangi.

What this World Golf Championship has shown is that golf is no longer all about competition.

This is the entertainment business.

It's not just about birdies and bogeys. It's television and corporate hospitality.

That's why Match Play switched to group play in 2015, and it's difficult to argue with the results. After 16 years of a few surprises — Jeff Maggert and Kevin Sutherland come to mind — the winners under the new format have been Rory McIlroy, Jason Day, Dustin Johnson and Bubba Watson.

McIlroy and Johnson joined Tiger Woods as the only No. 1 seeds to win. Day was the No. 2 seed. Watson, the two-time Masters champion, is considered the outlier in this context as the No. 35 seed.

So something is going right. But even with the change, it still doesn't solve one problem that exists in just about any format — the longer the tournament goes, the less interesting it gets because there are fewer possibilities.

Think back to The Players Championship two weeks ago when eight players



Tiger Woods plays a shot from a bunker on the 16th hole during a practice round at the Dell Match Play Championship golf tournament, Tuesday, March 26, 2019, in Austin, Texas.

Associated Press

had a share of the lead on the final day. In the Match Play, it comes down to two players over the final four hours, and that's assuming it lasts that long. Watson only had to play 12 holes to win.

There are 12 matches involving 24 players on Saturday. There are four matches involving the same four players on Sunday, and that includes the consolation match, which is for world ranking points, FedEx Cup points, the difference of \$138,000 and mostly something to fill dead time on television.

What would make the consolation match compelling is having Tiger Woods. In his 13 appearances, Woods has lost in every round except the semifinals. Put him in the consolation match, and it would be fun to compare which match had the biggest gallery and how much TV time each would get.

This is why the PGA Championship abandoned match play in 1958.

And it's why the PGA Tour never once considered any form of match play to decide the FedEx Cup at the Tour Championship. It is good to have match play once a year because it is

the purest form of golf. But no more than that.

"Wearing my player's hat, I would love to see straight knockout again," Paul Casey said. "But I understand it from trying to sell this from a corporate sponsor's point of view, from an entertainment point of view. You want as much golf as possible on the weekend." They want as much golf as possible on the whole golf course.

Imagine having a corporate hospitality tent on the 18th hole. Last year, only three of the 16 matches on the weekend even reached the 18th hole.

"If I lose on Wednesday, I want to go home," Casey said. "As much golf and excitement and drama to the end is ideal, but I don't know what the solution is."

Gone from the single elimination is the excitement of Wednesday, when half the field was sent home.

The group play still has a sense of urgency in the opening session, or at least it should. No one has ever lost on Wednesday and won since the switch to group play. Only eight players have lost their first match and won their group, with Bill Haas in 2017 reaching the semifinals.

Casey said one sponsor proposal sent to — and rejected by — the Players Advisory Council was match play until the weekend, two players from each group advancing and 32 players competing in stroke play over the final two days. That would be about the size of the Tour Championship field.

One problem.

"What would you call it?" Casey said, chuckling at the idea that stroke play would decide the Match Play champion.

He also has heard suggestions about stroke play for qualifying and then using only the back nine for 18-hole matches so the gallery and corporate clients in tents can see more action. "There's some outside-the-box thinking going on," he said.

More changes are possible, if not likely. Remember, the championship match used to be 36 holes until it was changed to an 18-hole final in 2011. Is it possible to reduce the length of the matches to nine holes so there could be more matches, more players, more possibilities on the weekend?

Anything should be on the table. □

## IOC WEIGHTLIFTING

Continued from Page 18

That's a shame, because the sight of huffing, puffing lifters heaving monstrous weights has long been one of the great Olympic spectacles, with boisterous and admiring crowds. The sport offered medal opportunities for countries, such as Thailand, that aren't Olympic powerhouses. But when anti-doping tests later reveal that much of the show is a fraud, the question must be asked: Is the IOC aiding and abetting steroid abuse in weightlifting by keeping it in the Olympics?

Fresher, younger sports can make solid arguments that they set a better, cleaner example and so are more deserving of inclusion in the games. Part of the appeal of skateboarding, climbing, surfing and karate, all making their Olympic debuts at the 2020 Tokyo Games, and of breakdancing, being proposed for inclusion in Paris in 2024, is that Olympic audiences should be able to enjoy them without the nagging doubt that many medals may have been won with doping and could be stripped when lab results come back.

Nearly half of the 45 weightlifting medals from the 2012 London Olympics were tainted by doping in one way or another. Some medalists were belatedly caught when the IOC subjected samples it had stored away to im-

proved testing that uncovered widespread use of the steroids stanozolol and turinabol among lifters from former Eastern Bloc nations. Kazakhstan lifter Ilya Ilin, who won gold in the men's 94-kilogram category in 2012 and at the 2008 Beijing Olympics, had the dubious distinction of later being stripped of both those medals after retesting revealed him as a steroid user.

Others medalists escaped that IOC net but were then unmasked by testing elsewhere. North Korea's Kim Un Guk, for example, has kept his 2012 Olympic gold from the men's featherweight competition but is banned until the end of this year following a positive test in 2015. The 2012 gold in the 85-kilogram class remains with Poland's Adrian Zielinski. But he then tested positive in 2016 and, after the Court of Arbitration for Sport recently rejected his appeal, is now serving out his four-year suspension.

On the women's side, the shocking case of Cristina Iovu, in particular, has weakened the argument that anti-doping suspensions have a deterrent effect. IOC retesting found that Iovu used turinabol when she won a bronze medal for Moldova in the 53-kilogram class in 2012. She also failed a test in 2013, having switched allegiances to Azerbaijan, and was banned for two years until



In this Sunday Nov. 13, 2011 file photo, Olha Korobka from Ukraine competes in the Women's +75kg category at the World Weightlifting Championships, in Paris.

Associated Press

2015. In what could now be a third strike for Iovu, and for a third country, the International Weightlifting Federation announced in December that the athlete, now lifting for Romania, is again suspended while being investigated for another suspected anti-doping violation.

In short, those who paid for weightlifting tickets at recent Olympics might have a case for a refund. Getting medals to rightful owners has taken years. Spain's Lidia Valentin Perez waited a decade for her silver medal from the 2008 Olympics, reallocated after IOC retesting unmasked three lifters who'd kept her off the podium in the 75-kilogram competition in Beijing. Robbed of her

Olympic podium moment again by three steroid users four years later in London, the Spanish lifter finally had the gold medal from 2012 placed around her neck at a ceremony in Madrid this month.

The latest drug-test positives from weightlifting's world championships will be reviewed at a meeting this week of IOC executives. They already have put weightlifting on probation. The electro-shock of no longer being guaranteed an Olympic place for 2024 helped jolt the sport into action. Nine countries with the most positives from the 2008 and 2012 Olympic retests were suspended for a year from 2017. The worst doping offenders, countries with 20 or more cases since

2008, will be limited to just one male and one female lifter next year in Tokyo. Thailand has banned itself from 2020 Olympic weightlifting entirely.

The Thai cases show the need for continued IOC pressure. It would do a disservice to weightlifting to end its probation before lifters have grasped that each additional doping positive inches the sport closer to farce. Get the Tokyo Olympics out of the way first. Re-analyze weightlifting's samples from the 2016 Rio Games. Then, the IOC could evaluate whether weightlifting is still doing more harm than good to the Olympic brand.

If so, there's no lack of attractive alternatives to take its place. □

## AP source: Mets, deGrom agree to \$137.5 million, 5-year deal

By RONALD BLUM

**NEW YORK (AP)** — NL Cy Young Award winner Jacob deGrom and the New York Mets have agreed to a \$137.5 million, five-year contract, a person familiar with the negotiations told The Associated Press. The deal guarantees an additional \$120.5 million over four seasons.

The person spoke on condition of anonymity Tuesday because the agreement was subject to a successful physical.

New York and deGrom had agreed in January to a \$17 million, one-year deal, and he was on track to be eligible for free agency after

the 2020 season.

His new deal calls for a \$10 million signing bonus, half to be paid in January 2020 and the rest in January 2021. He gets a \$7 million salary this season, \$23 million in 2020, \$33.5 million each in 2021 and 2022 and \$30.5 million in 2023. The Mets have a \$32.5 million option for 2024.

DeGrom has the right to opt out of the deal after the 2022 season and become a free agent. He also gets the ability to block being traded.

A right-hander who turns 31 in June, deGrom had a 1.70 ERA last year yet went 10-9 on a Mets' team that



In this March 12, 2019, file photo, New York Mets pitcher Jacob deGrom (48) pitches during the first inning of a spring training baseball game against the Miami Marlins, in Jupiter, Fla.

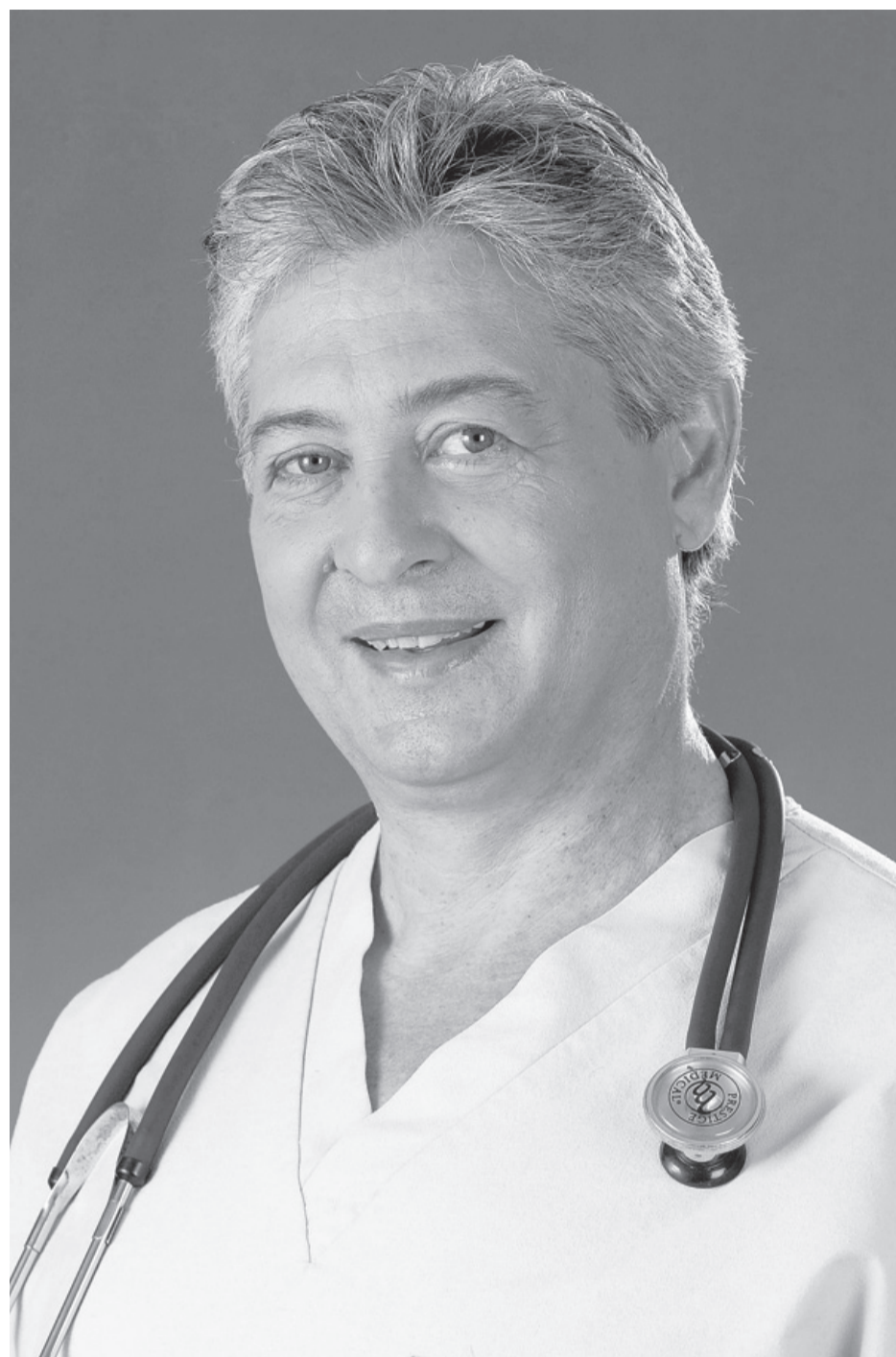
Associated Press

finished 77-85. He allowed three runs or fewer in 29 consecutive starts to close

the season, but the Mets were 11-18 in those games. DeGrom is 55-41 with a 2.67

ERA in five big league seasons. Mets general manager Brodie Van Wagenen represented the two-time All-Star as co-head of CAA Baseball before the team hired him last year.

New York reached the deal with deGrom following an agreement between Chris Sale and Boston announced Saturday that adds \$145 million from 2020-24 and raised the total for the left-hander to \$160 million over six years. Sale, who turns 30 this weekend, has been an All-Star the last seven years and would have been eligible for free agency after this season. □



**By: Dr Carlos Viana**

## Pre - diabetes and diabetes management

prevalence compared to the non-Hispanic white population.

Misunderstood as a simple sugar imbalance that can be readily corrected through medical treatment; diabetes, in fact, it is a complex medical disorder. Our communities have fundamental genetic predisposition, made worse by our social, behavioral, dietary, and lifestyle factors. The disease has serious implications for vision, cardiovascular health, kidney and nerve functions. Its control and prevention largely depends on lifestyle issues, including diet, weight management, and physical exercise—a many-sided combination of factors that makes treatment complex and challenging

Obesity is a symbol of type II diabetes. A tendency toward belly fat is associated with increased insulin resistance and contributes to its early onset. This may explain why 85% of children in Aruba who develop type II diabetes are overweight or obese at the time of diagnosis.

The pre-clinical stage (pre-diabetes) of type II diabetes is Metabolic Syndrome or Syndrome X. Metabolic syndrome is a collection of changes in your body that progress silently over a period of years. The critical change is increased resistance to insulin, the hormone that suppresses liver glucose output and removes excess glucose from the blood.

Your body is making the insulin, but the insulin is not available to your cells to convert glucose to energy. We know that virtually everyone who develops type II diabetes starts with insulin resistance. We also know that the risk of developing type II diabetes is highest among obese people who have an abnormal accumulation of fat.

Determining insulin resistance is not so much by the amount of body fat as by where the fat is located. In fact, one of the best predictive markers for insulin resistance is excess body weight, in particular around the waist or hips.

In the change from being overweight to being obese, the liver becomes resistant to insulin and the hormone's ability to suppress liver glucose production. Under these conditions, the excess insulin turns the liver into a 'fat-producing factory' with all of its negative effects. Once established, these disturbances in fat metabolism are devastating to blood sugar balance and weight management. Acceleration of this negative cycle and the collapse of pancreatic insulin production change Metabolic Syndrome or Pre-Diabetes which can be controlled or slowed with lifestyle changes into the ever deteriorating health condition, Diabetes.


Get The Point! Diabetes is the one of the top causes of death Aruba, Bonaire, Curacao the United States and Europe. From a study I conducted on Aruba and then published I was invited to lecture to an international scientific group of experts on the prevalence of Insulin resistance and related metabolic features, I presented facts and treatment options. Options that showed improvement in symptoms and on blood tests from lifestyle changes such as drinking more water, using a metabolic or blood type diet, daily supplements and regular exercise. If you are interested in getting your sugar under control, read my book, make an appointment, check for events. Let us help you become your best doctor. □

Here in Aruba, as in most modern societies, everyone knows someone who has diabetes. The World Health Organization estimates that by 2025, the number of people with diabetes will reach over 300 million—a staggering 122% increase in less than 30 years. Type 2 diabetes is an epidemic requiring global attention and urgent action. How-

ever, controlling your blood sugar levels and preventing diabetes type II can only be managed by you

As a medical anthropologist I know diabetes exhibits a strong ethnic preference: Native Americans, Hispanic-Latino Americans, and African-Americans show an increased

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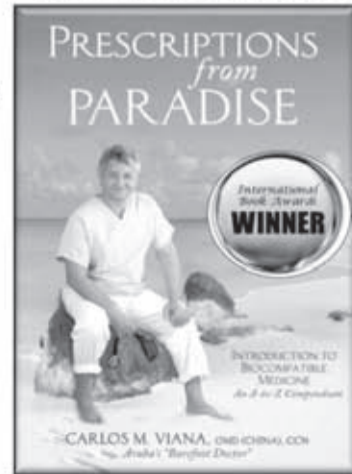


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# Millennial Money: There's more than 1 way to slay a debt

By SEAN PYLES  
Nerd Wallet  
Associated Press

The saying that debt is easy to get into and hard to get out of hits home for younger Americans: At the end of 2018, 18- to 29-year-olds carried over \$1 trillion in debt, according to the Federal Reserve. That's the highest level since 2007.

"Understanding your options and making a plan is imperative," says Billy Hensley, CEO of the National Endowment for Financial Education. "Anyone doing that is going in the right direction."

Knowing a few key points can help anyone — new to debt or not — resolve their debt faster and potentially save hundreds or thousands of dollars.

## CUT YOUR INTEREST RATE

A high-interest credit card or loan is costly. But you may be able to pay less interest, and pay off debt faster, with these tools:

## BALANCE TRANSFER CARDS.

Roll the balance of your existing cards onto a new one offering a promotional 0 percent interest rate. With your entire payment going to the debt, not interest, you'll pay it off faster and



In this Sunday, March 24, 2019 photo a passer-by walks on a pedestrian walkway, in Boston's Seaport district.

Associated Press

save money. Two caveats: Pay it off within the promotional period; and you'll need good or excellent credit to qualify.

## CONSOLIDATION LOAN.

You can consolidate multiple debts into a single payment with a personal loan. You might try this if your card balances are too much for a balance transfer card. This also requires good to excellent credit.

## DEBT MANAGEMENT PLAN.

If you're having trouble paying your minimums, a debt management plan from a nonprofit credit counseling agency can cut your interest rates and put you on a repayment plan.

TIP: Weigh the pros and cons. "Debt consolidation or balance transfer makes sense when monthly payback, interest and payment terms are less than your current payments," Hensley says.

He cautions, though, that transferring debt can tempt you to take on more debt. "The question is, will you be strong enough to not use that original credit card again to make ends meet or to fill a desire?"

## MAKE STUDENT LOANS MORE AFFORDABLE

If you're struggling to handle monthly payments, consider these options:

**FEDERAL LOANS:** You have several repayment options

if the standard plan isn't affordable. With the income-driven plan, for example, your payment will generally be around 10% of your discretionary income.

**PRIVATE LOANS:** Call your lender about repayment options. You may also be able to refinance student loans at a lower interest rate, though you'll need good credit to qualify.

**TIP:** Before you miss a payment you can't afford, look into ways to manage your student loans.

## QUESTION MEDICAL BILLS

Medical bills can be costly, complicated and confusing if there isn't a clear path to resolve them. But you have a few options to manage them.

First, make sure any insurance coverage has been properly applied. You should receive what's called an "explanation of benefits" letter from your insurer stating how much it covered. Compare that with your bill to check that charges are accurate.

Next, figure out how you're going to pay what you owe. For bills you can't cover in one payment, ask the service provider to establish a payment plan. □

# Technology companies, banks power US stocks solidly higher

By ALEX VEIGA  
Associated Press

Stocks rose broadly in early trading Tuesday on Wall Street, erasing the market's modest losses from a day earlier.

Technology companies powered the rally, with chipmakers among the biggest gainers. Nvidia rose 3.7 percent and Advanced Micro Devices added 2.3 percent.

Banks also notched solid gains as bond prices headed lower, sending yields slightly higher. That helps banks charge higher interest rates on loans. Morgan Stanley rose 1.8 percent.

Health care and communications stocks also notched solid gains. Energy companies climbed as the price of U.S. crude oil moved above \$60 a barrel. Oil hasn't settled above that price since

November.

The rally marked a reversal for the market, which started the week on a downbeat note after racking up losses last week as investors' jitters over a global economic slowdown intensified. That led to a troubling drop in long-term bond yields, which many see as a warning sign of a possible recession.

The yield on the benchmark 10-year Treasury note rose to 2.43 percent in early trading Tuesday, up from 2.41 percent late Monday. It's still slightly below the yield on the three-month Treasury bill.

Despite the market's recent gyrations, the benchmark S&P 500 index is still up more than 12 percent so far in 2019, an unusually strong start to a year, and on course for a solid first

quarter for the market.

**KEEPING SCORE:** The Dow Jones Industrial Average rose 218 points, or 0.9 percent, to 25,735 as of 10:12

percent. The Russell 2000 index of smaller company stocks picked up 0.9 percent.

Major European indexes

climbed 1.9 percent a day after the consumer electronics giant announced a suite of new services to run on its devices. □



In this March 18, 2019, file photo trader Gordon Charlop, right, works on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange.

Associated Press

a.m. Eastern Time. The S&P 500 index gained 0.9 percent and the Nasdaq composite jumped 1.1

percent. The Russell 2000 index of smaller company stocks picked up 0.9 percent. Major European indexes were also headed higher, rebounding from a day earlier.

**BIG APPLE:** Shares in Apple

Lock n Roll Timeshare Storage

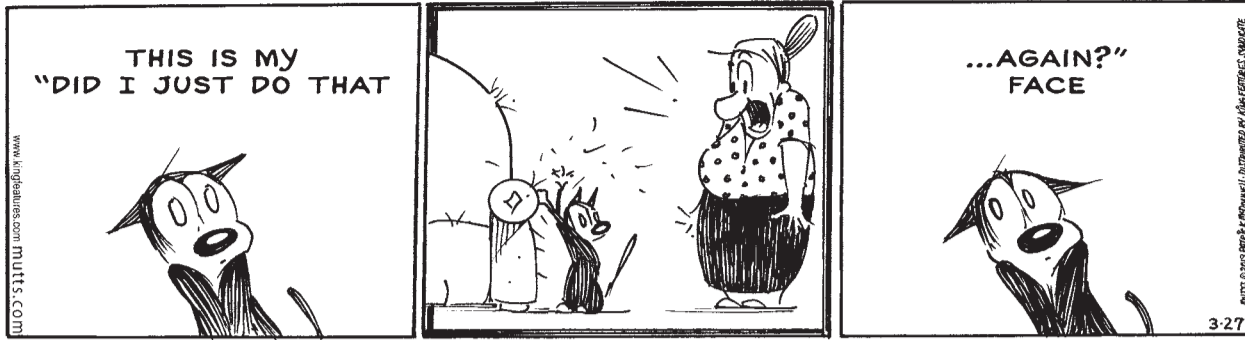
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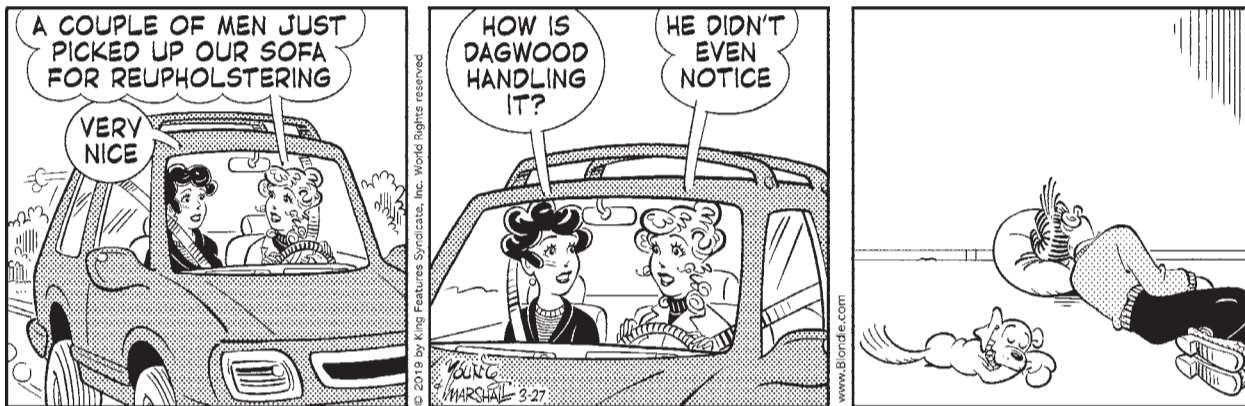
**Mutts**



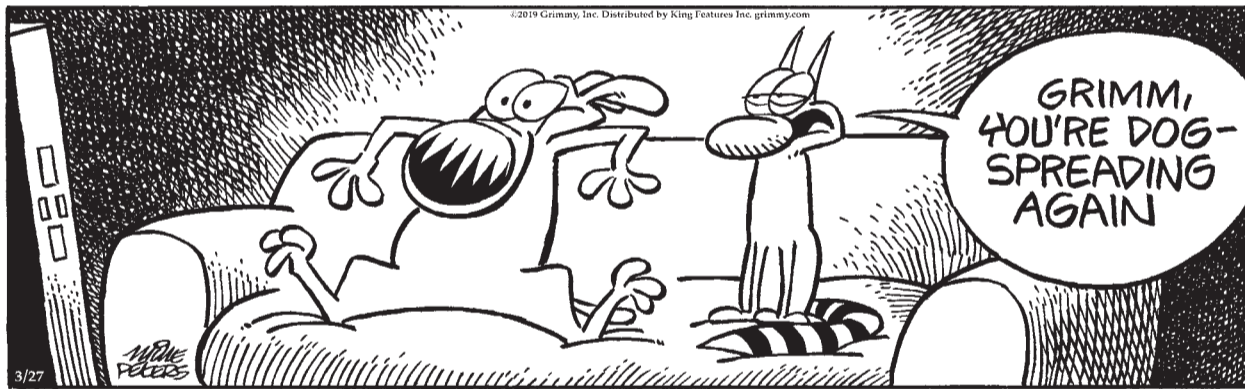
**6 Chix**



**Blondie**



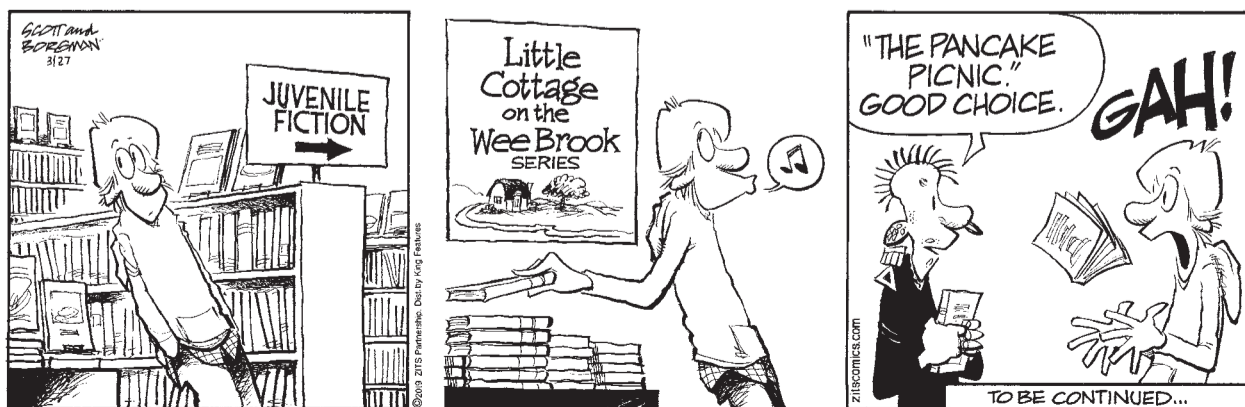
**Mother Goose & Grimm**



**Baby Blues**



**Zits**



**Conceptis Sudoku**

		7				6		
6			1		4			2
	1		6	2	7		8	
		1				9		
2	8					1		6
	6	5				2	4	
		6				3		
	5		7	3	9		6	
	4						5	

Difficulty Level ★★★

3/27

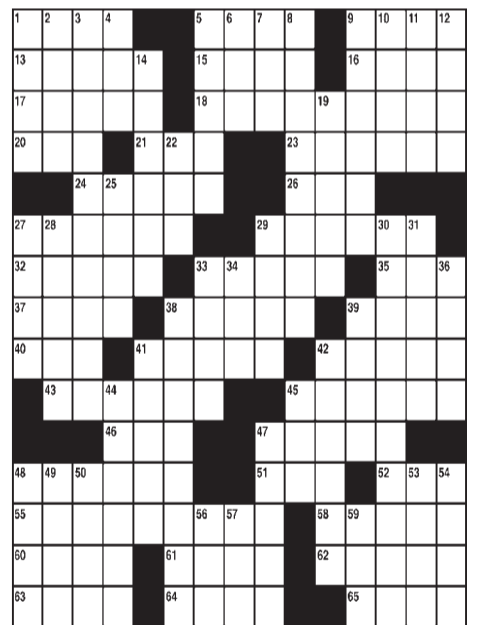
Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Yesterday's puzzle answer

4	3	6	9	1	5	2	7	8
1	9	7	8	2	3	4	6	5
5	8	2	4	7	6	1	9	3
3	6	9	7	5	2	8	1	4
7	5	1	3	8	4	9	2	6
2	4	8	1	6	9	5	3	7
8	7	3	2	4	1	6	5	9
6	1	4	5	9	7	3	8	2
9	2	5	6	3	8	7	4	1

**ACROSS**

- Came down to earth
- As comfortable \_\_\_ old shoe
- Additionally
- Turner & others
- São \_\_\_; large island in the Gulf of Guinea
- Pompous
- Agassi or Previn
- Not loud enough to be heard
- Enjoy a winter sport
- Actor Kilmer
- Cooks prime rib
- Fragrance
- Not at home
- Popular Honda model
- Items listed in a will
- Cut up a turkey
- Misrepresent
- Walk-\_\_\_; many NYC apartments
- Ash or alder
- Gathers crops
- Threesome
- "We're off to \_\_\_ the Wizard..."
- Phobias
- Written slander
- Not as fresh
- Tenor Enrico
- Olive Oyl's hairdo
- Absorbent cloth
- Shocked
- Trigger's rider
- Common street name
- Fraternal
- "Sesame Street" fellow
- Alleviate
- Wishes one hadn't done
- Hudson's namesakes
- Prepared Easter eggs
- In a \_\_\_; pouting
- Buzzers



Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

3/27/19

**DOWN**

- "Woe is me!"
- Long and thin
- Not prudent in speech
- Street paver's need
- Slanted
- Barron, to Donald
- "I \_\_\_ Rock"; 1960s song
- Mild emotional disorder
- Fly
- Good-natured dogs, for short
- Gritty residue
- Change for a five
- Harsh
- Throw water on
- Most common conjunction
- Sheltered bay
- Plays a role
- Is concerned
- Mont Blanc's location
- Agitation; commotion
- Secret agents

**Tuesday's Puzzle Solved**

ACE	ASNER	CHAP
CARS	ATALE	HORA
TRIO	ROSAS	ELMS
DEODORANT	REST	
TANK	LAY	
BRAHMS	SHERLOCK	
RISES	MOOSE	CHI
AVID	TIRES	SCAN
DAD	MALES	CAULK
SLEEPER	SHIRKS	
NHL	POOL	
SHOT	GALLOPING	
MAXI	ASIAN	NOEL
OVER	TASTE	GORE
GENE	ENTER	NEW

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3/27/19

- Dangerous animal
- Cochlea's place
- Song for one
- Goes in again
- Grow weary
- Straight beater
- Brief preparer
- Lessened
- Pigeon's cry
- Lovers' meeting
- Not up yet
- Elephant's color
- Nylons
- Similar to
- Soldier's meal
- \_\_\_ away; flee
- Garland
- Steal from

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### Aruba Divi Phoenix

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building 9 7th floor  
33 weeks remain \$25 K each  
1 BR WK 11  
building 7 3rd floor  
34 weeks remain \$15 K

### Ambassador Wing CDM

1 BR WK 12  
2sd floor pool/view\$7500  
La Cabana Beach and Casino  
Thursday check in  
1 BR and Studio WK # 11,12,13  
2sd floor garden view  
1 BR \$8000, studio \$7000

### Divi Links Golf

1 BR WK #11  
3rd floor B 3 \$9000  
26 weeks remain  
Studio wk # 11  
ground floor B 4 \$7500  
30 weeks remain

### Divi Village

Building C elevator  
2 BR wk 13 \$14 K  
3rd floor with 29/8 accelerated  
weeks remain  
1 BR WK # 14 \$7.5 K  
1st floor with 16 weeks remain

### La Cabana Beach and Casino

Sunday Check in  
1 BR wk 11 & 12 \$18 K both  
4th floor pool/ocean view  
Friday check in  
1 BR WK # 12  
4 th floor \$ 9000  
Garden/ocean view

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# Pence calls for landing U.S. astronauts on moon in 5 years



In this July 30, 1971 photo made available by NASA, Apollo 15 Lunar Module Pilot James B. Irwin salutes while standing beside the fourth American flag planted on the surface of the moon.

Associated Press

**CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP)** — Vice President Mike Pence on Tuesday called for landing astronauts on the moon within five years, an accelerated pace that would aim to put Americans on the lunar south pole.

Pence said NASA needs to achieve that goal "by any means necessary." Speaking at a meeting of the National Space Council in Huntsville, Alabama, he said NASA rockets and lunar landers will be replaced by private craft, if required. "It's time to redouble our effort," he said. "It can happen, but it will not happen unless we increase the pace."

Now, the earliest possible

landing on the moon by NASA isn't until 2028, Pence said. He acknowledged talent — and money — will be necessary to pull it off earlier.

Pence warned that if NASA can't put astronauts on the moon by 2024, "we need to change the organization, not the mission." The space agency must transform into a leaner, more accountable and more agile organization, and must adopt an "all-hands-on-deck approach," he said.

NASA Administrator Jim Bridenstine assured Pence that NASA will do everything possible to meet the deadline. Some outside experts were skeptical of the new timeline.

"I will be astonished if this happens," said Jonathan McDowell of the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics in Cambridge, Massachusetts, noting that a lunar lander still needs to be designed, built and tested.

"That is a hard challenge on a five year time scale even without political budget infighting," he wrote in an email.

This summer marks the 50th anniversary of the first manned moon landing. Since Apollo astronauts last walked on the moon in 1972, no country has made a serious attempt to send humans back to the lunar surface. For decades, NASA has flip-flopped between the moon and Mars, a victim of changing presidential administrations. More recently, President Barack Obama targeted Mars as astronauts' next big destination, while President Donald Trump has favored the moon.

In order to get astronauts on the moon by 2024, Bridenstine said the space

agency's new megarocket will be needed, but its development and pace will need to be faster. Two weeks ago, he said NASA was considering using private rockets instead to launch its new Orion capsule around the moon without a crew on a test flight next year.

But on Tuesday, he expressed confidence that the SLS, or Space Launch System, would be ready for the job. He also stressed the need for an outpost with astronauts near the moon to serve as a stepping-off point for lunar landings.

Pence leads the National Space Council. The advisory group held its fifth meeting at the U.S. Space and Rocket Center, right next door to NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center, where the Saturn V moon rockets were developed decades ago and where the Boeing-built SLS is now managed. This longtime rocket know-how is why Huntsville is nicknamed Rocket City.

It took just eight years for NASA to accomplish ev-

everything to put astronauts on the moon in July 1969. It was unacceptable, Pence said, that SLS delays and cost overruns point to a 2028 target date — nearly two decades after the SLS program began.

The vice president instructed NASA to aim to land on the moon's south pole, where considerable amounts of ice could be used for drinking and making rocket fuel.

"The exploration of the heavens in this still new century will go forward with or without the United States. But Americans don't do second place. Americans lead, and so we will," Pence said to cheers and applause.

Planetary scientist Alan Stern of the Southwest Research Institute said 2024 is feasible provided the accelerated effort is funded properly and commercial space systems are fully embraced.

"The moon is a truly outstanding target, both for science and for getting our exploration legs back before we set out to further destinations like Mars," Stern wrote in an email.

But former NASA official Scott Hubbard said five years seems "awfully short to me," given the lack of national security incentives like those that existed during Apollo and the Cold War race to beat the Soviets to the moon.

Hubbard pointed out that both Bush administrations proposed similar far-reaching exploration efforts. "Those didn't go anywhere and collapsed of their own significant financial weight," he noted in an email.

The University of Colorado at Boulder's Bobby Braun said he'd like to review the budget and details for implementation "as those details matter." He previously served as NASA's chief technologist.

"The United States aerospace community is certainly capable of achieving this goal if provided with stability of purpose and the resources to do so," Braun wrote in an email. □

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# Attorneys: Prosecutors drop charges against Jussie Smollett

By AMANDA SEITZ  
MICHAEL TARM  
Associated Press

**CHICAGO (AP)** — Prosecutors on Tuesday abruptly dropped all charges against Jussie Smollett, defense attorneys said, apparently abandoning the case barely five weeks after the "Empire" actor was accused of lying to police about being the target of a racist, anti-gay attack in downtown Chicago.

Smollett's attorneys said his record had "been wiped clean" of the 16 felony counts related to making a false report that he was assaulted by two men. The actor insisted that he had "been truthful and consistent on every single level since day one."

"I would not be my mother's son if I was capable of one drop of what I was being accused of," he told reporters after a court hearing. He thanked the state of Illinois "for attempting to do what's right."

It was not immediately clear what prompted the decision to dismiss the case. In a statement, the Cook County prosecutors' office offered no detailed explanation.

"After reviewing all of the facts and circumstances of the case, including Mr. Smollett's volunteer service in the community and agreement to forfeit his bond to the City of Chicago, we believe this outcome is a just disposition and appropriate resolution to this case," the statement from spokeswoman Tandra Simonton said.

Smollett paid \$10,000 in bail to get out of jail after his arrest.

Typically, a minimum condition of dropping cases is some acceptance of responsibility. Outside court, neither Smollett nor his legal team appeared to concede anything about his original report.

Defense attorney Patricia Brown Holmes said Smollett was "attacked by two people he was unable to identify" and "was a victim who was vilified and made to appear as a perpetrator." Authorities alleged Smol-



Actor Jussie Smollett leaves the Leighton Criminal Courthouse in Chicago on Tuesday March 26, 2019, after prosecutors dropped all charges against him.

Associated Press

lett knew the men and arranged for them to pretend to attack him.

Among the unanswered questions was whether prosecutors still believe Smollett concocted the attack or whether new evidence emerged that al-

tered their view of events. Smollett was accused of falsely reporting to authorities that he was attacked around 2 a.m. on Jan. 29 in downtown Chicago. Investigators said he made the report because he was unhappy with his pay on "Em-

pire" and believed it would promote his career.

The actor, who is black and gay, plays the gay character Jamal Lyon on the hit Fox TV show that follows a black family as they navigate the ups and downs of the recording industry.

He reported that he was assaulted on his way home from a sandwich shop. Smollett said two masked men shouted racial and anti-gay slurs, poured bleach on him, beat him and looped a rope around his neck. He claimed they shouted, "This is MAGA country" — a reference to President Donald Trump's "Make America Great Again" campaign slogan. He asserted that he could see one of the men was white because he could

see the skin around his eyes. Police said Smollett hired two men, both of whom are black, to attack him. Smollett allegedly paid the men \$3,500.

The men are brothers Abimbola "Abel" and Olabinjo "Ola" Osundairo, and one of them had worked on "Empire." An attorney for them has said the brothers agreed to help Smollett because of their friendship with him and the sense that he was helping their careers.

Police have also said that before the attack, Smollett sent a letter that threatened him to the Chicago studio where "Empire" is shot. The FBI, which is investigating that letter, has declined to comment on the investigation. □

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# DC superhero pic 'Shazam!' is a joy...seriously

By LINDSEY BAHR  
Associated Press

Holy superhero fatigue, Batman, "Shazam!" is actually good.

OK, so it's basically "Big" with superheroes and villains instead of businesspeople and girlfriends, but director David F. Sandberg has infused his film with so much heart and charm that it hardly matters. Even the deficiencies, like the

sluggish beginning and the random, ridiculous villains, fade away under a haze of goodwill because unlike so many big spectacle action pics with sequels in mind, "Shazam!" actually sticks the landing.

But perhaps I'm getting ahead of myself. Don't worry if you don't happen to know anything about "Shazam!" or are convinced that you won't care.



This image released by Warner Bros. shows Zachary Levi, left, and Jack Dylan Grazer in a scene from "Shazam!"

Associated Press

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	<p style="text-align: center;">CXC</p> <p style="text-align: center;">MON-THU 3:45   6:10   8:40 FRI 3:45   6:10   8:40   11:10 SAT 1:15   3:45   6:10   8:40   11:10 SUN 1:15   3:45   6:10   8:40</p> <p style="text-align: center;">CARIBBEAN CINEMAS VIP</p> <p style="text-align: center;">MON-FRI 4:35   7:05   9:35 SAT-SUN 2:05   4:35   7:05   9:35</p> <p style="text-align: center;">AML AMEEN   FRASER JAMES</p> <h2 style="text-align: center;">YARDIE</h2> <p style="text-align: center;">MON-THU &amp; SUN 9:15 FRI-SAT 9:15   11:30</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">HALEY LU RICHARDSON   COLE SPROUSE</p> <h2 style="text-align: center;">FIVE FEET APART</h2> <p style="text-align: center;">MON-FRI 4:15   6:45 SAT-SUN 1:45   4:15   6:45</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">BRIANNA DENSKI   JENNIFER GARNER</p> <h2 style="text-align: center;">WONDER PARK</h2> <p style="text-align: center;">MON-FRI 3:45   5:40   7:35 SAT-SUN 1:50   3:45   5:40   7:35</p>
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">ALSO SHOWING!</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">BRIE LARSON   SAMUEL L. JACKSON</p> <h2 style="text-align: center;">CAPTAIN MARVEL</h2> <p style="text-align: center;">WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES</p> <p style="text-align: center;">MON-THU 6:45   7:25 FRI 6:45   7:25   10:10 SAT 2:05   4:45   7:25   10:10 SUN 2:05   4:45   7:25</p> <p style="text-align: center;">CARIBBEAN CINEMAS VIP</p> <p style="text-align: center;">MON-FRI 3:50   6:30   9:15 SAT-SUN 1:10   3:50   6:30   9:15</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">TYLER PERRY   CASSI DAVIS</p> <h2 style="text-align: center;">A MADEA FAMILY FUNERAL</h2> <p style="text-align: center;">MON-FRI 4:35   7:00 SAT-SUN 2:05   4:35   7:00</p>

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I certainly didn't. Plus, there are a lot of superheroes to keep track of these days and someone who needs an exclamation point is and should be immediately suspect.

The movie isn't here to judge any lack of knowledge though. It's an origin story about a jaded 14-year-old Philadelphia foster kid, Billy Batson (Asher Angel), who's bestowed with superpowers by Djimon Hounsou (naturally). As Shazam, he's physically altered into an adult and takes the form of Zachary Levi. But of course, even with his height, his muscles, his voice and even his powers, he's still very much a kid and has a lot to learn.

Those are the basics, but the spirit really comes from the smart writing, the pitch-perfect casting and the supporting world around Billy and Shazam. Right before he gets his powers, he's placed in a new group foster home led by Rosa (Marta Milans) and Victor Vasquez (Cooper Andrews) that's full of quirky characters: Freddy (Jack Dylan Grazer), a disabled superhero obsessive with a biting wit; Eugene (Ian Chen), a violent video game obsessive; Darla (Faithe Herman),

the adorable youngest; Mary (Grace Fulton) and Pedro (Jovan Armand). The young actors assembled here are astounding, and immediately captivating, especially Grazer as Freddy and Herman as Darla who nearly steal the show. It's why when the film asks you to believe that it's really about family, and not merchandising, you're on board.

Freddy, with his wealth of superhero knowledge, helps Billy/Shazam figure out what to do with these new, strange talents. The training montages have a terrific comedic sensibility and Grazer and Levi are perfectly matched for the job. Levi in particular pulls off the tricky feat of playing a disaffected, but still fairly innocent young teenager while wearing spandex and a cape, no less. Grazer, meanwhile, who we've seen before in "It," is beyond his years with his ability to draw a laugh.

That's not to say the movie is perfect. The beginning gives an extended origin story for both Billy and the little boy who will grow up to become the megalomaniac villain, Dr. Thaddeus Sivana (Mark Strong). Dr. Sivana is woefully un-

derwritten, too, although Strong does his best being the straight, serious guy. For the most part it comes across as less of a threat and more of a buzzkill that gets in the way all the fun we were having with Freddy and Shazam.

Also, as if Dr. Sivana wasn't enough, the script gives him Seven Deadly Sins as henchmen. These sins take the form of unimaginative and indistinguishable CG gargoyles. I'm not exactly sure what lust or greed would look like in gargoyle form, but I'm pretty certain this isn't it. They're also given dubbed voices that feel about as authentic as the voices of the monsters The Power Rangers battled on Saturday mornings.

There's also a running gag about a strip club that seemed a little retrograde for a current film. But, nitpicks aside, "Shazam!" is just a lightning bolt of unexpected joy that is certainly worth your time and money. "Shazam!," a Warner Bros. release, is rated by the Motion Picture Association of America for "for intense sequences of action, language, and suggestive material." Running time: 132 minutes. Three and a half stars out of four. □

# Barry Lopez looks for hope beyond the 'Horizon'

By ROB MERRILL

Associated Press

"Horizon" (Alfred A. Knopf), by Barry Lopez

Part travel journal, part history, part science lecture, part autobiography, and completely unique, "Horizon" feels like the crowning achievement of Barry Lopez's illustrious career.

Fans of his National Book Award-winning "Arctic Dreams" (1986) and subsequent books about little understood landscapes, cultures and wildlife will find much to love here. Readers who have never read Lopez might be better served reading one of his single-topic tomes first.

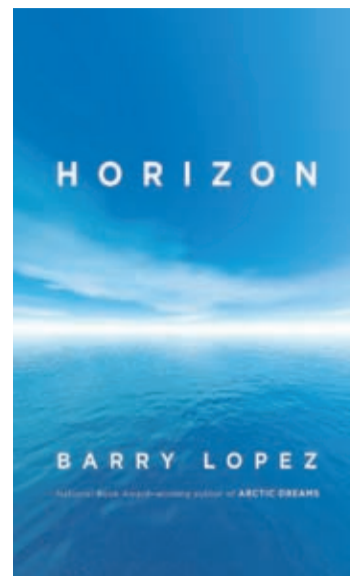
At 512 pages, this book is dense. It's divided into six main parts based on the geography of Lopez's life-long travels — western Oregon, the High Arctic, the Galapagos, Kenya, Australia and Antarctica. There are maps that help read-

ers visualize where our peripatetic narrator is at any given time, but not much else in the way of context. Lopez admits in the prologue that he consciously chose to simply tell stories, not explain any "juxtapositions in time," but it would have provided readers with helpful perspective to know more about his life circumstances during any given trip.

The resulting feel of the book is fragmented — perhaps intentionally mirroring the way memory works? — with passages about the power of music to "pry something ineluctable out of a particular landscape" (listening to Beethoven's Fifth Symphony on Skraeling Island, 660 nautical miles from the North Pole) just 20 pages removed from a technical explanation of how the Antarctic Moon and Neutrino Detector Array at the South Pole

works.

Each of the chapters is jammed with stories and personal reflections. Lopez, perhaps more than any other nature writer alive, is introspective to his core. Every experience, every sight, every person he meets, has made an impression on him and unlike most of us he kept notes. This book is his attempt to look back on it all and say something about the world we share. Here he is after looking at a piece of chalk white sandstone in his office, remembering the outrage he felt about acts of global genocide the day he picked it up on a beach in San Salvador: "What cataclysm, I often wonder, or better, what act of imagination will it finally require, for us to be able to speak meaningfully with one another about our cultural fate and about our shared biological fate?" Yet despite all the injus-



This cover image released by Knopf shows "Horizon," by Barry Lopez.

Associated Press

tice he's seen in the world and the irrefutable science showing how humans are altering the climate, Lopez manages to convey in his prose a sense of hope. Have you ever had a moment in your life when everything seems right with

the world, that you'll be OK no matter how hard any given task might be? Lopez shares one walking through a park in Sydney, Australia: "The most fragmentary of breezes occasionally unsettled the leaves of gum trees. The delicacy of the weather reinforced a feeling I had in that moment of unfocused exuberance, a faith that no matter what people had to face in the world that is coming for us, they would fare well. Whatever the nightmare, some group of us would see a way through, for ourselves and others."

Whether you personally lean toward the cynical or hopeful, one thing is certain — we need adventurous, curious souls like Lopez to keep traveling and bringing back stories from beyond our particular horizon — in order to find our way forward as a species, together. □

# Dutch art sleuth recovers Picasso stolen 20 years ago

By MIKE CORDER

Associated Press

AMSTERDAM (AP) — A Dutch art detective said Tuesday that he has recovered a valuable painting by Pablo Picasso 20 years after it was stolen from a wealthy Saudi's yacht in France.

Arthur Brand told The Associated Press that he took possession two weeks ago of the 1938 painting "Buste de Femme" after trailing it for years in Amsterdam.

Brand, a renowned sleuth whose previous finds include a pair of bronze horses sculpted for Adolf Hitler, has since handed over the painting, which he estimates to be worth around 25 million euros (\$28 million), to an insurance company. It wasn't immediately clear what would happen to the painting.

Brand said he knew it was the real thing as soon as he got his hands on it and peeled away two plastic bags covering the canvas. "You know it's a Picasso because there is some magic coming off it," he said.

But that wasn't the only



This image released on Tuesday March 26, 2019 by Arthur Brand, shows Dutch art detective Arthur Brand with "Buste de Femme", a recovered Picasso painting.

Associated Press

reason he was convinced of its authenticity. In cases of stolen art, he said, the back of a painting can tell experts more than the front.

He said that since the theft

from a yacht moored in the swanky French Riviera port of Antibes, a number of forgeries had been offered to insurers and rejected.

"But a forger never knows how the back looks," Brand

said, without specifying what was there. "When I saw the back of the painting, I knew it was the real one."

Brand began his latest hunt after hearing rumors about

a Picasso stolen from a boat.

"Finally, I tracked somebody down who had had it in his possession 10 years ago and he told me which one it was," he said. "And then it still took me three years to get near it."

Brand said the painting had circulated in the criminal underworld of the Dutch capital.

"It was used as some kind of money as payment for drug and arm deals," he said.

Eventually a person who had the painting in their possession decided to turn it in and reached out to Brand.

Martin Finkelnberg, head of the Dutch national police's art and antique criminality team, welcomed the recovery. No arrests have been made.

Finkelnberg told Dutch national daily De Volkskrant that having such a painting can be a burden and taking it to Brand is a way out. "Done. Everybody happy," Finkelnberg said. "The most important thing is that the artwork is back." □

# Mexico's last penal colony starts new life as nature center

By REBECCA BLACKWELL  
ISLAS MARIAS, Mexico (AP)

— It's unclear if Islas Marias ever really worked as a penal colony: The remote Mexican archipelago is battered regularly by hurricanes, and its ramshackle, often century-old installations are sprinkled with the ruins of failed "productive" projects that once aimed to make the prison population self-sustaining.

Now, with the prison just closed, the hurdles of distance, weather and decayed infrastructure may not make it easy for the islands to prosper in their new role as a nature center and education camp for children.

It's a rough, eight-hour boat ride out to the islands, which lie 70 miles (110 kilometers) off the Pacific shores of Mexico's Nayarit state. Appropriately for a place where most of the few dozen prisoners who attempted to escape drowned, the Environment Department says it is thinking about offering survival courses. Bird watching, nature walks and arts programs are also planned.

All that remains for now are a few goats, some cattle and once-domesticated cats that roam the main island where thousands of prisoners once lived.

The thick-walled remains of an old salt-evaporation warehouse and the disused pools of a former shrimp farm are a mute testament to the idea that Islas Marias was founded on in 1905 —



A mural of Nelson Mandela, who spent many of his imprisoned years in an island prison in South Africa, adorns a gate in front of the dock where prison staff and inmates arrive in Navy boats to the now closed Islas Maria penal colony located off Mexico's Pacific coast, at dawn Sunday, March 17, 2019.

that penal colonies could earn their keep, and reform inmates through clean living, ocean air and hard work.

Bars and cells weren't necessary because the surrounding ocean effectively prevented escape. Islas Marias was the last of its kind, the final of a half dozen island penal colonies that were scattered around Latin America. It was done in by high costs — almost \$150 per day per inmate, far beyond what mainland prison costs — and by the increasing space available at mainland prisons as legal reforms reduced jail populations.

Rogelio Zedillo, a former employee in the island's legal area, is one of the be-

lievers in the penal colony. Some of his fellow prison employees even want to stay on and are trying to swing transfers to the Environment Department, which will now oversee the islands.

"I think it's a pity that they have closed what could have been a model prison," Zedillo said. "They were self-supporting, they (inmates) were producing. They grew vegetables. They had cattle, goats, pigs. There was a fish farm and a salt works ... the problem was political, the authorities decided not to continue as a penal colony, and so little by little it fell apart."

Prison official Marco Antonio Rugerio Estrada spent the past 31 years on the main island, known as Maria Madre. He also is sad to see the prison go.

"It was a very healthy life," Rugerio Estrada said. "We started off every day in a very beautiful environment, and that allows you to see life in a different way. You wake up and say, 'I am in a very pretty place,' and you start to recognize yourself." But it was far from a tropical paradise for the inmates. They weren't allowed to go to the island's beaches. They led a fairly regimented life, with designated areas, bunk beds in small houses and 5 a.m. morning wake-up calls.

Officials say inmates also brewed homemade liquor out of fermented fruit and some tried to grow marijuana. The moonshine, known on the island as "turbo," led to a ban on the possession of sugar by inmates, since it accelerated the fermentation process.

The prison was started as a way to isolate and punish political prisoners, such as striking workers and socialists, and the inmates helped pay its way by working on the salt flats or at the shrimp farm. But in its waning years, salt could be harvested from evaporation ponds on the mainland more cheaply, and transportation costs for the island's shrimp production

made it less profitable.

A further blow was the decision in 2006 during Mexico's drug war to turn the colony into a regular prison holding as many as 8,000 to 10,000 inmates. The "semi-freedom" the island once offered inmates, and the production schemes, suffered under the influx. The overcrowded, under-fed inmates rioted in 2013, killing six people before marines regained control of the island.

A final blow came this past October, when Hurricane Willa made a direct hit as a Category 3 storm and caused about \$100 million in damages to the prison. Buildings can be seen around the island with their roofs torn off.

When it closed in February, the penal colony housed just 659 prisoners.

One of the most charming of the prison's features — that families, including children, could come live with some inmates — also proved one of its most costly burdens. And people worried whether the kids were getting a decent childhood on the island and questioned the cost of providing schooling and recreational facilities.

"There are a lot of people in the non-prison population who deserve that funding, to live a decent life," said Francisco Garduno Yanez, director of Mexican prisons who was assigned with the task of shutting down the penal colony. □



Weights made from cement lie scattered on the ground at an outdoor gym once used by prisoners at the now closed Morelos detention center during a media tour of the former Islas Marias penal colony located off Mexico's Pacific coast, Saturday, March 16, 2019.

Associated Press



Actor Jorge Correa, who led social rehabilitation theater programs with inmates, performs a one-man play on addiction for a group of visiting journalists inside a ruined salt processing facility during a media tour of the former Islas Marias penal colony located off Mexico's Pacific coast late Friday, March 15, 2019.

Associated Press